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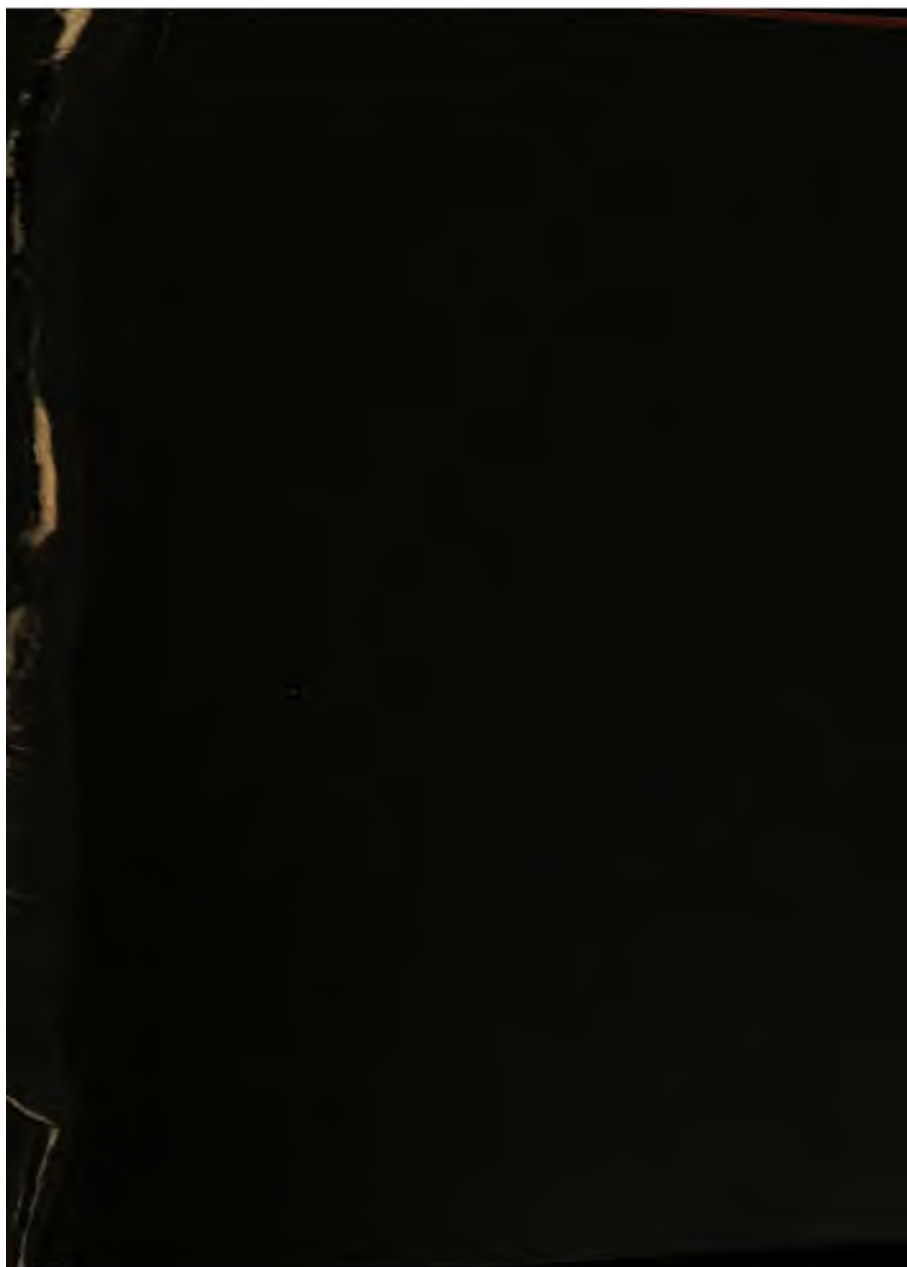
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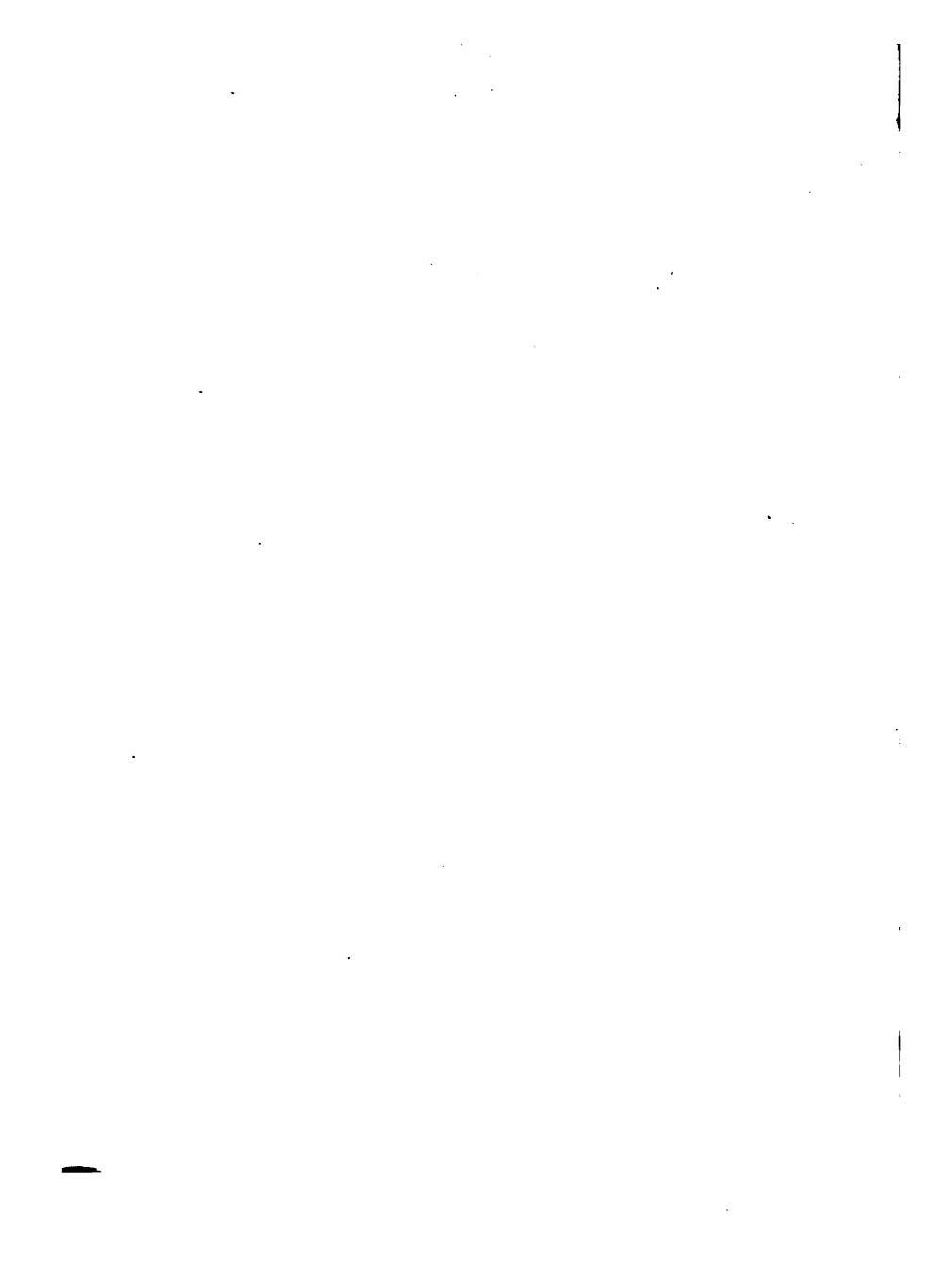


"Not Weary in Well-Doing."

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(Darling, J.)

Thomson







James Darling

JAMES DARLING

A MEMORIAL SKETCH

BY

REV. ANDREW THOMSON, D.D.,
Edinburgh.

WITH

SERMON

BY

REV. JOHN SMITH, M.A.,
Edinburgh.

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PREFATORY NOTE.



THE subject of this short memorial sketch is a Christian layman, and it must be confessed that this is a department of Christian biography which has hitherto been too much overlooked. If it is not an unwrought, it is certainly an unexhausted mine. How many shining examples of Christian excellence in private members of our churches, and in "elders who have obtained a good report," have been allowed to pass away without a record to perpetuate by their example their influence even in the district in which they had lived and moved ! The picture which I shall be called to present is not that of a man of great intellectual gifts,—though he was by no means deficient in these, and was remarkable for his common-sense,—but rather of one in whose character self-forgetting devotedness to the good of his fellow-men was the outstanding feature ; and who, in helping the poor and needy, reclaiming the outcast, guarding the tempted, and encouraging those who had been brought back as lost sheep to the Divine Shepherd's fold,—

and all this through a period of more than half a century,—made both the world and the Church his debtor. Nothing but the living power of Christian principle within him could have produced such a character. Those who were brought into intimate and frequent intercourse with him felt his example acting upon them as a moral tonic, and making it easier for them to do good, and they seemed to hear the words ringing in their ears—

“Work, work in the living present,
Heart within and God o’erhead.”

“As we have therefore opportunity, let us do good unto all men, especially unto them who are of the household of faith.”

A. T.

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MEMORIAL SKETCH.

EARLY LIFE—DALKEITH, 1820-58.

JAMES DARLING was born at New Farm, a little hamlet near Dalkeith, on January 22nd, 1820. His father held a place of trust on the home farm of the late Duke of Buccleuch. Both his parents are described by those who knew them well as distinguished by their intelligent and cheerful piety, shining out in their daily life with a light that could not be hidden. The mother is specially remembered as having been tidy and orderly in her household management, and in her expenditure out of the not too abundant income knowing how "to make a little go a far way." Their son often spoke with grateful emotion, in later days, of the unspeakable advantage of having "come of a godly seed." In the simple family prayers and the practical religion which pervaded and inspired the whole domestic life, the youth breathed an atmosphere of godliness. And the good influence of all this was constant. Like many who have thus grown up in Christian homes, he was never able to name the day of his "new birth." The divine change

was gradual and imperceptible. But there came a time, probably not far beyond his twelfth year, in which he became conscious of "the new life," and when onlookers were not slow to see that there was "some good thing in him toward the Lord God of Israel." He passed through the usual course of instruction at the parish school, and was a favourite with his teacher as well as on the playground. One of his schoolmates who still lives tells us that he never was a bold, rollicking boy, but rather needed to be drawn out, especially to boisterous play.

The family traditions lead us to conclude that he was naturally "quick tempered." And this feature in his character never entirely disappeared, but showed itself at times even in his later days. But he was not in the Scottish sense "*dour*," "nursing his wrath to keep it warm." His anger did not resemble the dark lowering cloud which is slow to dissipate, but rather the April shower which is soon followed by the sunshine.

A surviving brother in Aberdeen, in referring to some of the distinctive features of his character, dwells with a brother's congenial sympathy on his veneration and devoted attachment to his parents, delighting even to the end of his days to expatiate on their virtues, which, as he would sometimes remark, made it easy for him to love

them. And this filial piety includes much. It never comes alone, but draws many other good affections after it. Respect for the fifth commandment has, many a time, led the way to obedience to the first.

The same appreciative brother writes, with many a pleasing recollection, of incidents illustrative of James's natural humanity, and his carrying out, as often as he had opportunity, sometimes even to the letter, the inspired precept, "Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ." We quote the brother's own words :—

"He could not bear to see suffering of any kind without lending a helping hand to alleviate it. I have known him frequently lighten a weary mother's burden on her way, by taking in his arms a tired and fretful child and carrying it to their destination. Nor was he slow, if he overtook a burdened fishwife trundling her heavy-laden barrow to market, to seize the barrow and wheel it along, while she enjoyed the rest to her weary limbs."

His sympathy and practical benevolence were not bounded by the human family ; but, like a true follower of Him who "takes care for oxen," and "without whom a sparrow cannot fall to the ground," it extended to the brute creation. Lame

beasts and birds of every kind won his heart, and were his peculiar care. Dogs, especially, seemed to read his countenance, and at once to trust him. The same brother describes a somewhat amusing incident, which carries us back to his boy life, and happened while he was attending school :—" He was about eight years of age, and had one and a half miles to walk to and from the school every day. A neighbouring housewife in the village where our parents resided one day intrusted him with a commission to purchase a loaf of bread. This accomplished, he started for home, but on his way he encountered a stray hungry dog. Instinctively his right hand found its way to the loaf, and so great did the friendship between the dog and himself become, that it was only at the end of his journey, after shutting the garden gate on the delighted animal and looking below his left arm, that he discovered that he had nothing left of the loaf except the outside crusts."

His strong love for his brothers and sisters was itself no insignificant element in the family happiness. The touching death scene of a favourite sister, after a lingering illness, remained vivid in his recollection to the last, and was often referred to in his old age with tears. She was a lovely young woman of about eighteen years of age, and the members of the family

were gathered around her bed to speak the last farewell. With her hope evidently pointing upward, she asked them once more to sing along with her "The Happy Land," a favourite hymn. As the singing went on, one after another in the little loving circle faltered and broke down,—their music was drowned in grief,—and by the time that they had reached the last stanza hers was the only voice that had never failed nor faltered, and she sang on clear and full to the end.

When about the age at which it was common in those days to be indentured to a trade, young Darling became an apprentice-joiner on the estate of the late Duke of Buccleuch; afterwards serving as a pattern-maker with the Mushets at their foundry in Dalkeith; and then with Mr Wilson, a well-known builder in the same town. Those masters were not slow to testify that he had "served them with all good fidelity," and that their hearts safely trusted in him. He realised the conception of a good servant of the olden time, identifying himself with his masters' honour and interests. His masters in succession would have indorsed his brother's statement, that "faithfulness to trust was a strong feature in his character. He could not scamp his work, but made always the best job in his power." And he could not endure the

sight of "scamping" in others. In later years when he had himself become a master, and sometimes saw work superficially done by those in his employment, it was no uncommon thing for him, after a short interval of impatience, to make them stand aside and to do the work himself. His brother narrates an incident which was also characteristic of the future man:—"When serving his apprenticeship, he was on one occasion sent to Leith by his master to meet a servant girl who was expected to arrive by steamer from London. The vessel was timed to arrive early in the evening, but it did not. But he stuck to his post, pacing the pier the whole night through, until the steamer arrived in the morning. The young woman never forgot his kindness, and accorded him a warm greeting every time they met."

At the age of nineteen, our young journeyman became a member in full communion in the First United Presbyterian congregation in Dalkeith. It was the church in which his venerable parents worshipped, and in which he had been trained from his early childhood; and was then under the able and earnest ministry of Dr Joseph Brown. From the first he carried out his public act of self-consecration by becoming an active and joyful Christian worker. He at once joined

himself to a devoted band of young men, like-minded with himself, each of whom conducted a Sabbath morning fellowship or evangelistic meeting in one of the four neighbouring villages of which Dalkeith was the centre, so fixing the hour of their meetings as to be able to return in sufficient time for attending on the forenoon worship in their congregation. They never thought of making Christian work an excuse for absence from the regular services in the house of God, or for allowing one duty to be stained with the blood of another. They felt, moreover, that if they were to be good Christian teachers, they needed also, especially at their age, to be regular and diligent hearers, and that if they gave forth religious instruction without regularly receiving it, they would soon become empty, stale, and unprofitable.

In 1838, about a year before his connecting himself in full fellowship with the Church, he had become a pledged "total abstainer." But his public profession of his faith in Christ only increased his zeal against the prevailing intemperance and his efforts to reclaim to habits of sobriety those who had become the victims of this debasing vice, and to surround them with moral safeguards. Not that this form of benevolent effort engrossed the whole of his Christian

activity then or at any future period of his life, but it always held a prominent place in his labours for the good of his fellow-men, and, as will be seen afterwards, gave much of its shape and colouring to all his future life. In Dalkeith itself, and in the surrounding hamlets in which drunkenness nestled, he did valiant battle along with others with this great sin. He was by no means gifted as a public speaker, but he possessed other gifts which compensated for this want. He was good at organising meetings, and had a singular tact in infusing his own spirit into others, and setting them at work. Every good singer in his neighbourhood who was a foe to intemperance was sought to be enlisted in his service for social meetings and other gatherings, and while he usually shrank from attempting to address a meeting of adults, he had a marked gift for awakening and retaining the interest of children. One fruit of this last-named gift was the springing up, in a wide circuit all around Dalkeith, of temperance associations for children, resembling the more organised Bands of Hope for the young of a later period. His energy in the cause of temperance was largely expended on these societies for children. He often remarked—"It would be a great victory gained if we could save the young, and thus make the race

of drunkards comparatively scarce." Indeed, wherever he went his eyes were on the young. On one occasion, when sent with a number of fellow-workmen to execute some work on the shores of the Crinan Canal, his spirit was stirred within him to attempt some temperance work among the young; and when he returned home he left behind him not a few tokens of his untiring zeal.

Then he was very successful in what has been termed a "two-handed conversation." His blunt outspokenness won the day when mere *finesse* would have failed. While some may at the moment have winced or smarted under it, he seldom alienated a friend or made an enemy. He was seen to be earnest and honest. His charitable judgments of those Christian friends who did not always "see eye to eye" with him in some of his methods, kept intact his belief in the sincerity of their Christian zeal, and made him ready to welcome their co-operation. Standing manfully and unmovably on his position of total abstinence, he could love and say God-speed to those who stood still at the point of a less rigid temperance. He could have said with the homely force of Matthew Henry, "There are plenty of devils for us all to cast out." If ever he thought that he "did well to be angry," it was at the uncharitable reflections cast by some extremists

upon the Christianity of others, who were kept, by honest conviction, from being less pronounced than themselves.

By this time our busy worker had begun to feel that "it was not good for a man to be alone." On July 26, 1848, he was joined in marriage with Miss Anne Reid, of Aberdeen. She was a true helpmeet, "a gift from the Lord." Her superior mental gifts, graceful manners, calm self-possession, power of plan and order, noiseless but genuine piety, and, not least, her sympathy with her husband in his good works, did much to increase alike the happiness and the usefulness of their united life. But a serious accident which occurred to the husband at an early period in their married life brought a temporary gloom over their home. In connection with the coming of age of the Earl of Dalkeith, the heir-apparent to the title and estates of the Duke of Buccleuch, a large triumphal arch had been erected over the entrance to the town. When a body of skilled workmen, of whom our journeyman was one, were engaged in its removal early on the morning after the celebration, either through some mismanagement or want of sufficient hands, the whole extemporised structure suddenly gave way, and one of its supporting beams falling upon his limbs so severely wounded

him, that, for a considerable time, he was altogether disabled for his work, while he was permanently unfitted for the amount of manual labour to which he had been accustomed.

What was now to be done? The brave heart of the young wife rose to the occasion. She thought she saw a crying want in the busy little town, and that her husband and herself might try to meet it. It was agreed, on her suggestion, that while her husband continued for a time at least at his wonted employment, they should open a Hotel or Coffee-house to be conducted on temperance principles, and that it should meanwhile be placed mainly under her management and care. It turned out to have been a happy venture. In those days Dalkeith was the great market-town in Midlothian for the sale of corn. On Thursday, which was the weekly market-day, hundreds "clothed in their best" came crowding from every part of the county, and far beyond, to buy or sell. The hotels and humbler public-houses overflowed with guests. It was surely a very modest proposal that there should be one unpretentious hotel innocent of strong drink, and from which they could hang out the total abstinence flag. With an encouraging amount of business on common days, on the weekly market day the savoury broth and beef in the Temper-

ance hotel dining-room attracted large numbers. The experiment succeeded even as a commercial enterprise, while it saved multitudes from a form of temptation which it was in every way wiser and safer to avoid.

During some of those later years in Dalkeith, Mr Darling's brother, the Rev. Hugh Darling, was minister of the Secession congregation in Stichel, Roxburghshire, a place already rendered memorable by the fact that the famous Dr Waugh of London had there begun his ministry, and also made sacred to many by its having been the scene of those great sacramental gatherings on the neighbouring Stichel Brae, which, in the vast multitudes who were drawn to them from every quarter, and in the annual religious revivals of which they were the occasion, had much about them of the character of a Pentecost. The two places were not so distant from each other as to make meetings between the brothers very difficult, and the intercourse, while it lasted, was a source of much enjoyment and spiritual profiting to both. But it was short-lived. After a ministry of nine years, the health of the accomplished pastor became so imperfect as to require his removal to a more genial clime, and the remaining part of his life was mainly spent in Australia, where, after various removals,

he was permanently settled as minister of the Church of Emerald Hill, a suburb of Melbourne. He died in 1876.

ST ANDREWS, 1858-1863.

In May 1858, Mr Darling removed with his family to St Andrews, with the hope that he would find a wider scope for his enterprise in that old historic University city. The worthy husband and his helpmeet took with them four children who had been born to them in Dalkeith—Thirza, Margaret, Jane, and Isabella Bunyan. They opened a neat, comfortable, and unpretentious Temperance Hotel in College Street. Their sterling worth was not long in being appreciated in the new Christian circle into which they had passed; and not least by their new minister, Dr Black, now of Wellington Church, Glasgow, who, in a letter recently received, bears glowing testimony to the Christian usefulness and cheerful piety of both. But their business did not turn out so successful as they had been led to anticipate. One solid and lasting benefit they did indeed find in their new home, in the admirable education which their children received in the Madras School and College. But, meanwhile, the few busy summer months did not compensate for the long and unproductive months of winter

and spring. In addition, the new Medical Act which came into force during those years, producing a great diminution in the number of candidates coming to St Andrews for the degree of Doctor of Medicine, told against them. Accordingly, after an experiment of five years, and waiting until they saw the distinct indications of Divine Providence—the motions of the “cloudy pillar”—they removed to the wider sphere of Edinburgh, where they fitted up and opened that large hotel in Waterloo Place, with which the name of “Darling” has ever since been honourably associated. Meanwhile, before leaving St Andrews, their family treasury had in one respect been made richer by the birth of their only son, Thomas Brown Darling, now practising as a successful physician in Morning-side.

EDINBURGH, 1863-90.—THE REGENT HOTEL.

The good name of Mr Darling had travelled before him to Edinburgh, so that, although the risks were large, the landlord was willing to accept his character alone as sufficient guarantee that all obligations would be surely and honourably met. And he was not mistaken in his confidence. There were already a considerable number of hotels in Edinburgh conducted on

the lines of total abstinence, in common with Mr Darling's. But the distinguishing feature of this hotel from the beginning was that the religious element was systematically, though not obtrusively, wrought up with its whole administration. It was happily remarked by one of the guests that Mr Darling truly "made room for Christ in the inn." Visitors coming to Edinburgh with something more than a Christian name were attracted to it in increasing numbers, because it brought them into intercourse with persons of congenial spirit, and continued to them many of the enjoyments and privileges of a Christian home. Not only from numerous places in our own kingdom, especially during the great Ecclesiastical Assemblies, but from America and the British colonies, there was an annual influx of guests, the same countenances, in not a few cases, re-appearing from year to year.

FAMILY WORSHIP.

Particularly the evening family worship was an outstanding feature and a powerful attraction. At ten o'clock the gong was sounded. Nothing like constraint was used to secure the presence of any guest, but all were invited, and it was a rare thing for any one to be absent. Work was for the time suspended, that every

servant might be present. The service usually consisted in the singing of psalms and hymns, the reading of the Scriptures, and prayer,—the master of the house presiding, or some one among the visitors who was known to be competent for guiding the family devotions. At times the service was carried beyond its regular limit, for the children of the family, growing up to womanhood, all possessed the gift of song, and helped much in the “grave sweet melody.” Mr Darling and his family had now found their niche and mission. We have before us some letters of visitors, kindly written after their return home, in which they speak of those nightly gatherings—“wells in the desert” as one calls them—with glowing enthusiasm. We are tempted to quote a few passages :—

*From Mr DRUMMOND GRANT, Coleraine,
Ireland.*

“A visitor at the Regent Hotel for many months, the gathering of the guests and of the whole household in the drawing-room for evening worship at ten o’clock was to me a channel of grace and a perpetual joy.

“Often during my residence have I heard other visitors express their thankful appreciation

of this 'well in the desert,' and testify to the gladness they felt in joining there in the communion of saints with the other guests, whose path for a few days crossed theirs as they journeyed to the Mount Zion.

"Mr Darling made conscience of being always present. He gave out the hymn himself, and read the portion of Scripture, and usually prayed. His prayers I remember well,—humble, fervent, direct,—always asking for some definite thing,—ever conscious of sin, and confessing it,—conscious also, and confessing it, that through the atonement of Christ, which he held with a firm grasp, this sin was washed away from the soul of every believer. He remembered there any sick or tried member of the company of visitors, and he took in in his wide sympathy the whole family of God, and especially the workers in temperance and evangelistic missions, with all which he had ever an intense and practical sympathy. Frequently he would request some known guest to lead in prayer. This was often an introduction of one Christian to another, and thus many happy and lasting friendships were begun.

"The assembly for worship was seen at its best on Sabbath evenings, when the visitors, perhaps forty in number or more, after their various church services in the city, entered the

drawing-room on the sounding of the gong, followed by the troop of male and female domestics. Then Mr Darling, radiant after his active Sabbath work, finishing with some school of else-uncared-for children miles away in the country, would take his seat at the table and give out some well-known Gospel hymn. The singing of this was led by Miss Darling, and heartily joined in by the company. A portion of Scripture was read. Some one then gave unity and voice to the mute prayers of the worshippers. Always on this evening a second hymn was sung, and after it Miss Darling or one of the guests sang another hymn or two ere the company retired.

"This 'worship' threw over the hotel a charm, marking it as a Christian home. No visitor was pressed to attend, while all were invited. It was a free and glad worship.

"During those many years what a testimony it was and a confessing of God and Christ before men! What quickenings of slumbering consciences in godless lives have there not been as they found themselves in that home, face to face with God and His truth, from whom they were fleeing! What seeds of truth have *there* been dropped in passing, but receptive, hearts! How many 'solitary' and sad ones, set for the time in that family, have by its cheerful worship been

cheered ! How many workers have there received fresh impulse in their labours for the Lord ! God only knows !

“Of this I feel assured. From that home altar waves of blessing have rolled out to the ends of the earth, borne by the ever-changing company of visitors from all parts, who there found that the worship of God was not confined to so-called holy places or times ; and that at no time, and nowhere, was it more fittingly offered or more welcome to God than at the evening hour around the hearth in the home.”

From Dr MOXEY, Lecturer on Elocution, New College, Edinburgh.

“One of the first to call on me after my conversion, and to welcome me as a brother in Christ, was Mr Darling. Like the practical man I afterwards found him to be, his visit did not end in mere congratulation ; but, with a view doubtless to my own good, and to the effect that the testimony of a young convert often exerts, he engaged me to meet a company of friends in the drawing-room of the Regent Hotel. It was there, as far as I remember, that I first, in my own city—the city that saw my body into earthly existence and my soul into life eternal—told out the story of the love surpassing knowledge.

"In the providence of God, my wife and I found a temporary home, often for months at a time, in the Regent Hotel, and our acquaintance with Mr Darling was continuous and intimate. We always found him the same self-unconscious, utterly unselfish man. One seemed to feel that he was carrying on the hotel more to give employment to others, or to afford means to assist others, than for any personal gain. He was a father to the servants and a friend to the guests—a man with a big heart. His ever cheery smile and the warm grip of his hand gained your liking ere he said a word; and when he spoke, it was generally to tell you some good news of the rescue of some poor drunkard, or to enlist your sympathy in a bereaved family. The only thing he said nothing about was the immense sacrifice of time and the substantial help in money that had come from himself. I never met a man in my life who would inconvenience himself to the extent that Mr Darling would to help a fellow-creature. No expenditure of time or effort was denied, and I fear I have trespassed too often on this beautiful trait in his character. The last case I named to him was a poor man in the Grassmarket, up five flights of steps. He started right off to see him, found him bedridden, with a wife and young daughter, and not a penny

in the world except what might come from the charity of some Christian friend. He prayed with him, relieved his pressing needs, obtained a regular grant from a public fund, and found his daughter a situation with one of his own family. This loving, unostentatious service to this poor dying Christian lasted till his death, and smoothed his passage to the grave. It may be he has thanked James Darling in the presence of Him who reckoned the good deed done to Himself.

"On one occasion I met him carrying a large basket, evidently for some poor woman, on the North Bridge. It never occurred to him to be put out, or to stammer out an explanation. 'How are ye, doctor? I've gotten a load the day,' was all he said, and he looked as if he enjoyed the burden.

"Only one other circumstance I would mention, and it is in connection with the family worship which he conducted night by night in the drawing-room of the hotel. Frequently he has invited me to read the portion of Scripture or to lead in prayer. I always grudged taking part in either, as I had more enjoyment and, I believe, reaped more benefit in listening to him, and I could not but think that it would be similarly more beneficial to the company present. There was an inimitable naturalness and absence

of effort, added to a humility and reverence, in his conduct of the service, and it was always a disappointment to me when he called on any one else—even of his frequently distinguished guests—to take a part. I do not remember any occasion of his reading the Scripture wherein I did not obtain a new light on some verse or verses; I never had a similar experience with any one else's reading."

LABOURS OF LOVE.

In the midst of the increasing engagements and cares of his hotel, Mr Darling so arranged matters, and was so assisted by the members of his family, all of whom were like-minded with himself, that almost everyday he found time for walks and visits of benevolence. He did not merely seize opportunities of doing good when they presented themselves and, as it were, lay across his path; but he sought them out, and rejoiced when he had found them. He could have said with Job, "I was a father to the poor, *and the cause which I knew not I searched out.*" He needed no interpreter to explain to him our Lord's saying, "It is more blessed to give than to receive"; his heart was its ready expositor, and responded to it every day.

And there was a pleasing variety in his

methods of doing good. At one hour you might have found him up on the sixth storey in some old tenement in the Old Town, carrying food and Christian consolation with it to some aged saint or bereaved widow with her orphans. At another hour you might have seen him among the shops or with the master-tradesmen, seeking employment for some one who had been reclaimed from intemperance, or, better far, had become a Christian convert, and thus to raise him from struggling poverty into honourable industry. On another day you learn that some ragged boy or street waif has been picked up by him and taken home, and fed and decently clad, and in the end sent to school. At another time you meet him on the street, evidently bent on some errand of mercy, and you learn that some poor fellow whom he had known in better days had sunk into indigence, principally because of imperfect health,—that he is about to have his house furniture sold to pay the demands of his landlord for rent, and that Mr Darling is hurrying on his way to the auction room to buy back all the most valuable articles, and to restore them free to his distressed brother. A friend has sent us another story, which we give in his own words:—

"One day when passing along one of the streets of Edinburgh, his eye lighted on a little ragged boy. Soon Mr Darling was engaged in con-

versation with him. He found that the lad had neither father nor mother, nor any one to take an interest in nor help him, and as he pathetically informed him, 'I sleep on stairs or anywhere I can at nights.' 'Come with me and I will give you something to eat,' said our friend. This done, the next duty was to get him clothed, for he was in rags. Off went Mr Darling on a begging errand in search of a suit of clothes. These procured, the boy was led to the laundry, where the fatherly hands washed and clothed the little 'city arab,' and it was only when this divine-like action had been done that the members of his own household made the discovery of his absence."

The newsboys in Princes Street liked to claim acquaintance with him, and when they descried from a distance his bland and open countenance, flocked to him with noisy demonstration, being sure of a customer who would pay them more than they asked. These are a few known examples of his readiness and even eagerness to do good. But there are abundant reasons for believing that the instances were far more numerous of what Wordsworth styles "those daily unremembered acts of kindness and of love," of which no one knew beyond his beneficiaries, except that "Father who seeth in secret," and will one day "reward openly."

MILLERHILL HOME MISSION.

But true benevolence, especially when it is rooted in Christian faith, always manifests its life by growth ; and Mr Darling had only been a few years in Edinburgh when he gave a new illustration of this law by the institution of what has long been known as the Millerhill Home Mission, which owed its origin to him alone, and was indebted to him mainly for its further beneficent and steady development. The district known by this name stands at a nearly equal distance between Musselburgh and Dalkeith, and contains four villages with about fifty houses in each—Millerhill, Old Craighall, Adam's Row, and Monkton Hall. His heart yearned for a sphere which lay conveniently to his hand, and he found it in this group of villages not far from each other, and which could be reached from Edinburgh by railway in half an hour, and at almost any hour in the day. Standing as outposts on the remote borders of their respective parishes, they were inconveniently far from any place of worship. Very few of the inhabitants frequented any church, and pastoral visitation or oversight among them was almost unknown. Mr Darling began in 1871, by taking on lease a little cottage in the midst of them, in Old Craighall.

His first step in this new evangelism was to open a Sabbath school in this village, having connected with it a meeting for adults at the dismissal of the school. This was to break ground on a hitherto neglected and uncultivated soil. He was encouraged in this earliest effort by the late Sir Archibald Hope of Pinkie, who kindly granted him the free use of the village day-school on Sabbath evenings. The next step in advance was the bringing of a Bible-woman on the scene. This gave to the mission a living connection with every house in the four villages, for the humble Bible-woman was welcomed into homes where even the minister or the regular missionary would not always have been so readily received. Her labours were at once very abundant and wisely varied. The Scriptures were read in every house, and wherever it was convenient prayer was offered. To how many was this a new experience! Nor was the temporal good of those villagers forgotten, or even cast into the shade. Classes were formed for teaching the girls sewing and knitting, and every other likely expedient was used to produce habits of industry, cleanliness, and thrift in the homes. By-and-by the Penny Savings Bank cropped up as an important factor in the moral and social elevation of the people. Mothers' meetings were also

formed, and presided over by the Bible-woman, in all the four villages.

When Mr Moody was in Edinburgh in 1873-74, a great religious interest was awakened among those villagers, and a wave of revival spread over the whole of the district. Evangelistic meetings extending over a period of five weeks were held in the parish church and schoolroom of Newton, and earnest students in whose hearts the holy fire had been kindled came down from Edinburgh to address the crowding multitudes, Mr Darling's own family gladly and efficiently assisting in the service of song. Inquirers began to present themselves on the second week of the meetings, and the stream of interest flowed on and deepened to the end. At length it became necessary to secure the labours of an evangelist, who should assist in reaping and gathering in the waving harvest.

All this increase of agency necessarily involved an increased expenditure and pecuniary responsibility, and during the earlier years of the mission these were entirely and cheerfully borne by Mr Darling. But the time came when this burden must be shared, and at length a society, under the name of the "Millerhill Home Mission," was instituted, Mr Darling continuing to give and work with undiminished liberality and energy.

While he was quite as active as in his younger days in the cause of total abstinence, and was blessed with much success in reclaiming both men and women from intemperance, he still continued to attach special importance to the formation and fostering of Bands of Hope for the young, knowing how much the character of the future generation depended on the moral training of the children of the present, and how much easier it always was to prevent evil than to recover from its bondage. He had a strong belief, moreover, in the power of children to influence children, and to help and cheer each other in the right way.

One of the sunny memories which he delighted to recall, even in his advanced years, was a joint meeting of the Bands of Hope of Musselburgh with those of Millerhill and the other three villages. The juvenile gathering was at Musselburgh. It was a beautiful and sunny afternoon in the month of July, and after a united meeting on the grounds of Pinkie (kindly granted for the occasion by Sir Archibald and Lady Hope), with suitable entertainment and hymn-singing, there was a short convoy given by the Musselburgh children to their visitors from the four villages. The Musselburgh Band of Hope walked along the eastern side of the Esk between the two bridges

and the Millerhill Band on the western side. Trees in all the exuberant bloom and beauty of midsummer lined the banks of the stream on either side, yet not so much as to conceal from each other "the little travellers Zionward" with their tiny waving banners. While moving with equal pace, they sang with mingled pathos and hope the touching hymn, "Shall we gather at the river?"

At the end of eighteen years (1889) Mr Darling withdrew from his loved work in Millerhill. He felt that his service was no longer needed, for the ministers on whom the spiritual oversight and religious instruction of the region had all along rested were now ready to have it transferred to their hands. But he could distinctly trace, within the circle containing those four villages, many signs of a general elevation in the moral tone of the community. And he could tell of multitudes recovered from a vicious life, and of many brought into the kingdom of God. All this he knew. But how much remains to be revealed in a future world?

The following testimonies are interesting and valuable :—

From PRINCIPAL CAIRNS.

"Another recollection which I can recall is still earlier; the event must fall soon after I came

to Edinburgh. Mr Darling had for some time kept up with his family a meeting on the Lord's Day evening at the mining village of Millerhill, east of Portobello. He applied to me one evening to take this meeting. I was very busy with preparations, if I remember rightly, for my college work, and sought to escape. But he was so unaffectedly in earnest, that I had to comply; and I well remember the happy evening that was spent with himself, and one or more members of his family who took me out, and brought me home, and the impression of self-denial and zeal which this labour made upon me."

*From a RAILWAY SURFACEMAN, formerly of
Millerhill.*

"About twelve years ago, a friend of mine invited me to a temperance meeting at Old Craighall. I went. Your father was in the chair. At the close he asked me to join. I promised I would at the following meeting. My brother-in-law went with me, and I joined, and all this time I was a stranger to God and His mercy. One Sabbath afternoon, about a month after this, I saw your father coming to the meeting. He said to me, 'Man, Andrew, will you come with me to-night and hear a grand preacher telling us all about the Lord Jesus Christ?' This

I refused, but he was not very easily shaken off, for the next Sabbath he came to my house, and told me that I *must* go. I went, and that night was the beginning of days to me. Shortly after, the Lord saved me in the schoolroom at Old Craighall. After your father heard of what had happened, he came to me and said many comforting words to me, and told me if I should get into any difficulty when reading the Scriptures, just to go up to the cottage, where I would find an old Christian friend who would pray with me and help me. Of course I did all this, and I have to thank the Lord and your dear father that I am what I am.

“He was always ready to help in any good work. One very stormy night, I remember, Mr Dunn, the evangelist, and a few of us were singing in the Rows, and inviting the people to the meeting. Snow was falling fast, and we were just about to give up singing when your father’s voice was heard singing among the rest. He had just come from Edinburgh, and it was very dark; it was in the month of November. After we sang ‘Hold the Fort,’ which he asked to be sung, he saw the people going away to the meeting, and he ran away to get a brush to brush the snow from their clothes, so that they would be comfortable in their seats.

"The Sabbath school which he so ably conducted is still to my knowledge bearing fruit. He could always command silence when it was needful. I can bear testimony to the children loving him with warm hearts.

"I can safely say that Mr James Darling was the means of more good in Old Craighall and district than ever he was aware of."

The writer of this letter became a successful colporteur in connection with the National Bible Society of Scotland.

CARRUBBER'S CLOSE MISSION.

Another sphere of usefulness and influence in which Mr Darling took a prominent and active part, and in connection with which he was in due time chosen as a director, was the well-known Carrubber's Close Mission. He had been preceded in the management and work of this mission by a fellow church member, Mr Alexander Jenkinson, to whom in its earlier history, next to its venerable founder, Mr Gall, it was more indebted than to any other man. In its later and more expanded form, since the first visit of Mr Moody to Edinburgh, Mr Darling's labours were invaluable. In the work of organising meetings and securing acceptable speakers for the large weekly assemblies, he grudged

neither time nor toil. And when all this had been done, he would go forth, some time before the hour of meeting, into the neighbouring streets and slums, and by every device of kindly moral suasion seek to induce men and women to "come and hear." And when this was accomplished, he would, with characteristic self-forgetfulness, withdraw into the shadow and be an earnest worshipper and listener.

There were occasions at this period of his life when he was induced to address such large meetings, and in the Bands of Hope for children he was a frequent speaker; but it was in conversation with individuals that he most delighted and excelled. His success in this latter form of evangelism was indeed remarkable. And there were qualities in the man, and in his manner of intercourse, which so far explain to us the secret of his success. There was nothing of a pharisaic air in his bearing, even to the most sunken and depraved. He remembered that it was "by the grace of God that he was what he was." And then he never would allow even those who were the most abandoned to despair of recovery, or to think that it was in vain for them to "try." He would remind them that the Gospel embraced in its compassionately urgent call the chief of sinners, that "God was not willing that any should perish," and that there

was not an angel in heaven that would not be made gladder at the news of their repentance. And his look of compassion and goodness, beaming upon them all the while, charmed away suspicion, and made it impossible for them to doubt that he was intensely in earnest.

The mention of Mr Darling's organising zeal and power brings up to our recollection an evangelistic and temperance meeting remarkable alike for its vast numbers, its seemly order, and its seriousness, which was held about eight years ago on the Calton Hill, on the afternoon of a bright Sabbath day in summer, which in a great measure owed its arrangements as well as its origination to him. The impression produced by the very greatness of the multitude was great, and it became necessary to divide the multitude into sections, which should be addressed by different speakers. The outward scenery and surroundings added to the impressiveness and sublimity of the sight. Who that has ever stood on the Calton Hill on a bright summer afternoon, and looked around him on the wondrous picture which nature and art spread before him, could be surprised at this? We quote the words in which Principal Cairns refers to it, in a letter written on the occasion of Mr Darling's death:—

“ Another reminiscence illustrates his interest in open-air work connected with temperance. It falls, I think, about seven or eight years ago. It was after Gospel-temperance began to have so much emphasis laid upon it. Mr Darling, with other friends, on a lovely evening, I think, in the early autumn, organised a large temperance meeting on the Calton Hill. It was the largest open-air meeting that I ever addressed in Edinburgh. The view was exquisite, such as only the Calton Hill can equal, when day has not yet passed into evening, but has something of its sweetness. There was also the pensive sacredness of the day, not disturbed by the crowd, the song, and the life of an unwonted service. Of all this, not the least affecting figure that I recall is that of Mr Darling. It has often occurred to me, and is a monitor of what might be done did we take the great panorama of nature more with us.”

Mr Darling's connection with Carrubber's Close Mission brought him into contact with not a few touching cases of sorrow which were the immediate fruit of sin. We mention one out of many. An afflicted father came to him with the sad story of a daughter who had wandered away from the family fold and disappeared. He was inconsolable, all the more that there were some things

which led him to fear that the young creature had been decoyed into the way of transgressors. But where was she? Mr Darling's sympathy was at once awakened by the story, and he hastened to join with the father in searching for the wanderer. After much inquiry, and repeated disappointments, they found her weeping in a prison cell, and suffering punishment for a serious misdemeanour. The end was the moral recovery of the offender. In the deeper sense "the lost was found."

Instances came under his notice during his evangelistic visits, or otherwise, in which the subjects of his kindness had seen better days, but had sunk from competence into indigence through a succession of adverse providences. Cases like these awakened his special sympathy. The occasions were not few on which, before the family meal was begun, some of the choicest parts of the provisions on the table were selected, and at once sent away by a messenger to the hungry sufferers, that they might eat with them, as it were of the same food and at the same table. One is apt to think that the appetite of the givers would be improved by such charity. Most surely, at all events, their spiritual life would be benefited.

GOSPEL-TEMPERANCE.

But Mr Darling's zeal in the cause of Gospel-temperance refused to be restricted in its action within the boundaries of Edinburgh. Carrying out the spirit of the Mission which he represented, in villages and little provincial towns, within easy reach of the capital, he held evening meetings, to which the people were usually summoned by "posters" on the walls. Knowing well, however, that this mode of advertising would not be sufficient of itself to secure an audience from the midst of a hitherto unawakened people, it was his custom to arrive in the town or village early on the afternoon of the day of meeting, and by a rapid canvass to do his utmost to make his meeting "a success." For such extemporised gatherings especially, a harmonium was an important auxiliary in attracting people, and generally he succeeded, by importunity and tact, in obtaining the use of one from some friendly family of good social position in the little community. But the question often arose, How was it to be conveyed to the desired place? It was not uncommon to see the earnest man, dispensing for the time with his dignity, taking his full share, along with two or three strong youths who had volunteered their services for the occa-

sion, in bearing along the instrument to the hall or schoolroom in which the meeting was to be held. A large audience usually compensated him tenfold for all his toil and trouble. But in fact he lost no opportunity in promoting his mission. Instances have been known in which through conversation on the top of a tram-car, or while standing beneath an open shed for protection from a shower, he won disciples. "Instant in season, out of season."

It has been affirmed that Mr Darling was the first man in Scotland who wore the Blue-ribbon temperance badge; and in the story we are about to quote, the use by him of this badge proved to be no insignificant factor in connection with the "saving of a soul from death." A sailor who belonged to a vessel that traded between Leith and the Continent, and who for many years had been the slave of intemperance, was present by the invitation of a friend at a Gospel-temperance meeting in Queensferry, in the month of June 1882. He was much struck by the solo singing of one young lady, and not only by the music, but yet more by the Christian truth and religious sentiment of which the song was the vehicle. For still, as holy Herbert had said long before—

' A verse may find him who a sermon flies,
And turn delight into a sacrifice."

On that night the sailor, along with many others, put on the blue ribbon, with the honest intention of keeping the pledge of total abstinence which the wearing of it implied. We shall leave him to tell the remaining part of the story in his own words :—

“Coming into Leith one evening, I heard with sorrow of the serious illness of a dear sister resident there, one who had never encouraged me in my drunken orgies. Next morning I stood at her deathbed, and saw her pass quietly but insensibly away. I was stunned at the unexpected blow, and my old enemy thought the opportunity too good to be lost. ‘Take a little to keep up your spirits,’ he whispered; but I struggled hard that day. My poor wife begged me not to touch drink, and I promised, but even then I felt I could not struggle much longer with the fearful thirst. I wandered about the streets till I found myself in Leith Street, Edinburgh, hardly knowing where I was going or what I was doing, dragging my steps past each public-house with difficulty, one thought ever in my mind, that if I tasted drink I should be drunk at that dear sister’s funeral. But I could stand it no longer, and at last I stood and reasoned with the tempter, and I yielded just to take one pint of stout to keep me from falling, I felt so weak,

and then to go straight home by train, and not come out again that night. But, thank God, while I yet hesitated on the threshold of a public-house in Leith Street, I caught sight of a bit of blue on a gentleman's coat passing the door, and, with a revulsion of feeling, I thought, 'Oh, if that gentleman knew my struggles, he would give me good advice.'

"What an eventful moment that was to me! I hurried down the street after the gentleman, touched him on the shoulder, and, I am not ashamed to confess it, burst into tears. Urged by his entreaties, I was taken to his house; and as he was on very urgent business himself, he was delighted to find a Christian gentleman in his home, who welcomed me. We were shown into his parlour, where sat the very lady who had sung so sweetly at the Gospel-temperance meeting at Queensferry, who was made the instrument, in the hand of a merciful God, of pointing me to Him who is the poor sinner's Friend, *who is able* to keep us from falling. Never did words find a more willing hearer. I saw indeed how helpless I was, and realised the sufficiency of our dear Lord to save and keep. I have from that day rejoiced in the liberty wherewith *He hath* made me free, and only feel too happy in adding my humble testi-

mony to His power, hoping that these simple facts may induce you, and all who may read this, to *show their colours* everywhere.

"I may mention, in conclusion, that the gentleman I met in the street was Mr Darling, of the Regent Temperance Hotel, Edinburgh; and the lady, his daughter, Miss Thirza Darling; the other gentleman, Mr Armstrong, city missionary,—all of whom, and many more, can tell my simple story."

The subject of the above story is now an energetic and zealous missionary in connection with the Seamen's Christian Friend Society, in Appledore, North Devon. An incident which has come to our knowledge proves that the bravery of the sailor has not diminished in his new life. One day he was conducting a religious service in a Bethel, when he heard the cry of a child drowning. In a moment, having named a hymn for his audience to sing, he rushed to the shore, threw off his outer dress, and dashing into the sea, swam out, and, at great risk to himself, rescued the sinking child, when to onlookers the deliverance seemed hopeless.

INFLUENCE OF MR MOODY.

This seems a suitable point in our narrative at which to mention that Mr Darling, in common

with his whole family, received great and lasting religious benefit from the evangelistic labours of Mr Moody in Edinburgh, in the winter of 1873 and the spring of 1874. It greatly quickened him in his zeal for the conversion of souls. Of course it did not diminish, but rather increased, his efforts in the cause of total abstinence, especially in seeking to recover those who had become the victims of intemperance ; but, more than ever, it made him look upon this, even when attained, as rather the starting-point than the goal of his aims, and feel that his work was not ended until the object of his care and prayers had been brought a penitent believer to the feet of Christ. This made him hail with much satisfaction the extensive formation of Gospel-temperance societies, in which the end sought was not only the reformation, but the regeneration of the whole man. On the first evening of Mr Moody's evangelistic meetings in Broughton Place Church, three members of Mr Darling's family remained at the close for conversation with the good evangelist ; not, however, as anxious inquirers, but as young Christians desiring a higher life, and an increased self-consecration and joy. The benefit derived from the interview was permanent, not least in their endeavouring to awaken inquiry and interest among others, and

to bring them under the influence of the great revival wave. Particularly on the occasion of Mr Moody's second visit to Edinburgh, one of their number did invaluable service, of which the earnest preacher himself was not slow to testify, in organising and conducting the large female choir at the great noon-day prayer meetings, and in conversing with inquirers of her own sex and age.

THROUGH DEATH INTO LIFE.

Some years before Mr Moody's return to Scotland, a cloud of great affliction had cast its dark shadow over that happy Christian home. Bella Darling, the youngest daughter, died in her twentieth year, 3rd November 1875. At the early age of twelve she had given her heart to the Saviour. She was a singularly bright, devoted, and happy young Christian, as the published "Memorials" of her brief life, which have been read by tens of thousands, have amply proved. Those years of her converted life were literally strewn with the golden fruits of her evangelism. We shall be forgiven if we quote some passages regarding her, from a prefatory note which it was our privilege to affix to those "Memorials." Those who knew her best can testify that the picture is not over-coloured:—

"Accepting present salvation as the free gift of God through Jesus Christ our Lord, she walked in almost constant sunlight, and became herself a 'Sunbeam' wherever she was known. Old and young loved, and even venerated, the youthful believer. The joy of the Lord was her strength. It raised her above the entanglements and enticements of this world's insipid pleasures. 'The water which Christ had given her' made her thirst no more for streams of false delight, and it was in her a well of water, springing up into everlasting life. With the roll of Christian assurance in her hand, she felt Christ's 'yoke to be easy, and His burden to be light.'

"This again led to a cordial and unreserved consecration of herself to God. There was no hankering after what she had renounced. What does he who has received a crown care for the dead leaves beneath his feet? Nor did she wish to hold back anything from Him who had bought her with a price. Her rare gift of sweet song was laid on her Redeemer's altar, and in the prayer meeting, at the Sabbath morning breakfasts for the poor in the Drill Hall, in hospitals and infirmaries, at the bedsides of the sick and the dying, she was present with her radiant countenance and her Christ-loving heart, often drawing tears from 'eyes unwont to weep.'

The strength of her Christian faith and love made her bold and faithful in speaking and pleading for Christ. Her letters to her former school companions and the friends of her childhood show how intensely she yearned to win souls, and how strongly she felt that her truest act of friendship was to lead those whom she loved to the feet of Jesus.

"In her life of most active usefulness she never became erratic, or imagined that she could do good only in extraordinary services. She attended on her church duties with exemplary regularity and unflinching relish; and in her minister's class she was not only to the last a most diligent scholar, but by her singing in the class choir did much to make its exercises both edifying and attractive. The planet shed its light from its own disc. If we measure the length of her life merely by the number of years that she lived, it was indeed a short life—a very span; but if we measure it by the amount of good that she did in it, then it was a long life, and to her the 'early death became the earlier immortality.'"

The first company of Jubilee Singers who visited this country from America were men and women of intelligence and piety, and had come for the purpose of raising, by means of a series of musical entertainments, a fund which should

help in founding a College that would provide for their coloured brethren in the United States the means of a higher education. They had lived for a few weeks in Mr Darling's hotel, a short time before Bella's fatal illness, and had enjoyed her sweet songs, but more than this her simple-minded devotedness and the elevating and purifying influence of her conversation. When the news of her death reached Dumfries, eighty-four miles distant, whither they had gone, they at once determined to be present at the funeral. It was a beautiful and spontaneous tribute to the character of the departed young maiden. I shall never forget the effect produced by their singing at the funeral service. Without any pre-arrangement, but gently gliding in with soft and solemn sound, they sang one or two hymns full of pathos, in which the sentiment was wonderfully interpreted by the music, and the whole company of mourners was moved to tears. Then followed a hymn of hope and victory, in which the refrain was repeated again and again, "She has laid down her cross, and taken up her crown, and gone home,"—the earliest notes which were scarcely audible gradually rising and swelling into the loudest notes of triumph, the hearts of all rising with the music and the sentiment of the hymn, until

we seemed to enter into the joy of her who had died in the Lord. These interesting and sympathising strangers soon afterwards wrote thus worthily to the afflicted parents :—"God permitted us to enjoy her pure and sweet companionship for a few weeks, and then took her home to Himself, to give us a new incentive to faithfulness in our duties, and to add a new strand to the golden cord by which our hearts are drawn towards heaven."

DRILL HALL FREE BREAKFASTS.

We have yet to refer to a few more of Mr Darling's "works of faith and labours of love." One of the benevolent agencies with which he identified himself from the beginning was the Drill Hall Sabbath Morning Free Breakfasts for the Poor, which began in December 1874. As usual, when he gave his name in favour of any movement, it was not merely to flourish as a patron or well-wisher, but to work for it at the full bent of his means and opportunity; and so he took an active practical interest in this new enterprise from the first. At the beginning its meetings were held in a school-room in Stevenlaw's Close, High Street. But soon this room became inconveniently small, and an overflow meeting needed to be provided for. What was to be done

to meet this new emergency? Mr Darling was ready with a very practical and welcome answer. He had recently acquired refreshment rooms at the corner of High Street and St Giles Street, and the use of these was offered for the accommodation of the motley guests,—the poorest of the poor. His zeal and liberality went even beyond what we have yet described. In the course of time the spacious Drill Hall was needed to contain the ever-increasing guests.

For many years to come, at a very early hour on Sabbath mornings, in every kind of weather, cold and tempest never hindering him, he was present at the preparation of the breakfast, at which hundreds of hungry ones were to receive their best meal for the week, as well as to be instructed by short addresses on the way of life. Not unfrequently he also supplied speakers in the person of guests who were staying at his hotel, who, catching something of his own enthusiasm, were more than willing to be present at the strange gatherings. His daughter Bella was also there to the end of her brief life, leading the choir, and ready to converse with young inquirers of her own sex, and to tell them “the old old story of Jesus and His love.” What a deep and holy joy it must have been to her father,—a joy shared, as we know, by the angels,—

to learn from time to time that these labours of love on the part of his child, especially in "singing the Gospel," had not been in vain. It is superfluous to say that this blessing was not confined to the Drill Hall. A gentleman having occasion to visit one of the wards in the Royal Infirmary, was brought into conversation with a young man, one of the patients, who professed to have recently passed from death unto life. On being questioned further, he stated that a young lady had sung at his bedside a beautiful hymn, one part of which had been to him as the revelation of a new world and won his heart to Christ. It turned out on further inquiry that the young female evangelist was Bella Darling.

BAND OF HOPE WORK.

We have already had occasion, more than once, to refer to the special importance attached by the subject of our narrative to Bands of Hope, which he evidently regarded as, on the whole, the most hopeful and easy means of rooting total abstinence from strong drink among the principles and habits of a people. The sayings, as we have seen, were daily on his lips as household words, that the character of the next generation mainly depended on the moral training of the children of the present, and that it was

always a more easy thing to prevent evil than to recover from its bondage. And associations under such names as the "League of Juvenile Abstainers" had existed early in the history of the temperance movement, and done good so far as they went. It was not, however, until 1876, that the Edinburgh Band of Hope Union was founded, and that similar societies for the young began to be recognised everywhere as a regular part of the temperance organisation ; and from the initiation of the Union until the end of his life, Mr Darling was one of its most active Directors. He delighted in children, and this made him all the more ready to give himself to the movement with all his heart ; for them he had the sunniest smile and the heartiest laugh, and his facility in addressing them increased with his experience and age. He knew how to speak to children without being childish ; and while there was often very little attention to logical sequence in what he said, his addresses abounded in homely pictures and in pithy sentences with hooks which laid hold of the juvenile mind. Even the boy "roughs" in the closes of the Old Town were won by him, and he knew how to lift them out of the gutter without walking into it himself. By no meeting of young recruits of total abstinence did Mr Darling receive a warmer welcome, with his beam-

ing countenance, than the Band of Hope in his own congregation of Broughton Place ; and their affection sometimes sought tangible expression in gifts, the value of which was greatly enhanced by the thought of the loving young hearts that gave them.

His zeal in this matter, as in some others, overleaped the boundaries of Edinburgh. He would willingly travel long distances to assist in forming or fostering such Unions. Those in Kirkcaldy, Falkirk, Stirling, and Jedburgh, and many other towns, honour him to this day as one of their founders.

One story out of many illustrates his tact in dealing with children. He had undertaken the management of a church social meeting in a village about eight miles out of Edinburgh. A multitude of the village boys had gathered around the place, more, it is likely, from the love of fun than of mischief, but impeding the entrance and making noisy demonstrations. Some men, in such circumstances, would probably have come forth and scolded them, threatening at the same time to bring the policeman with his "pains and penalties" to disperse them. But our friend adopted a course which showed that he better understood the hearts of such youngsters. Coming out and looking

kindly on them, he asked them to be quiet, and stand aside for a time, promising that as soon as their parents and friends had been suitably entertained, he would provide them with an equally good meal, and inviting them one and all to meet him at a given time in a neighbouring barn to which he pointed. Of course he was punctually true to his engagement, and so were the young and hungry guests to theirs. Arranged in good order, tea was served, and bread and buns of every description were distributed without stint, and by the time that the feast was over, Mr Darling and his new friends had come to be on the best terms with each other.

But this by no means exhausted the programme which had all the while been in Mr Darling's mind. Referring to the humble barn in which they were met, he began to speak to them of Jesus Christ the Saviour of men, who had been "born in a stable and cradled in a manger." By easy transitions he found his way to the subject of intemperance, expatiating on the misery and shame and ruin which it brought upon those who yielded to become its slaves. Would it not be well for them on that very night to join in forming a Band of Hope against this evil in its root and branch? He had stricken the iron when it was hot, and his

words did not fall to the ground. Within a week, the news came to him that thirty-five names had already been enrolled in the new society, which continues to flourish up to the present day.

THE ELDERSHIP.

In 1885 Mr Darling was chosen to the office of the eldership in Broughton Place Congregation, of which, from the time of his coming to Edinburgh, he had been a member. He was cordially welcomed into the ranks of the Session by his brother elders, and more than realised all the favourable anticipations which they had formed regarding him, as one who would keep before his mind the solemn thought that he had been called to "watch for souls as those who must give an account." Combining in his character a sound judgment with a large-hearted charity, he could work pleasantly with others, and believe in their conscientiousness, and love them not the less, when he sometimes differed from them in his practical judgments. He had a most wholesome horror of fads and crotchets. In his district as elsewhere, he was self-forgetting in seeking the good of others to an extent reached by few. And he was a man of prayer, and an earnest lover of peace. During the few years in which

he lived to discharge the duties of the eldership, which to him was no sinecure, or downy pillow on which to fall asleep, every member in the district which was specially committed to his oversight had come to regard him as a personal friend. The poor among the people were always on his heart. He was quite the kind of elder to whom a perplexed member would go for advice, or a sorrowful spirit for consolation.

One member in his district, an earnest Christian worker like himself, sends us this grateful testimony to the benefit she derived from his visits. "His visits were a great pleasure to me, and, however busy I might be, I always felt myself quite willing to leave the most pressing work and have a little talk with him. He was so full of love to Jesus, and to souls. After his visits, I always felt myself stirred up to new effort in rescuing the perishing and doing all that I could to win back souls to Christ. Mr Darling had ever some new case in hand, and he would tell out all that was being done by himself and others to lift up some one who had sunk far down through drink, or some other indulged sin.

"Although he was greatly interested in cases that came more directly under his own notice yet he was a most willing listener to all that others had to tell of their work for Jesus. Often

have I seen the tear come to his eyes as he listened to the story of some weary wanderer returning to the bosom of his Lord. It was this deep interest and sympathy, shown in all departments of the Lord's vineyard, that made his visits so helpful to me as a Christian worker; and one felt that he was most suited for an elder, not only because he was a great worker himself, but because he encouraged others to go and do likewise."

"BE OF GOOD CHEER."

Mr Darling was not only a cheerful worker himself, but, as has just been testified in the above extract, he encouraged others in doing good. He had a look of kindness and a word of cheer for every toiler in the Lord's vineyard. He seemed so happy and whole-hearted and hopeful in all that he did, that others felt themselves morally stronger in his presence. If he met a fellow-worker who was downcast and desponding over his efforts at usefulness, you might almost be certain that there would be a quickening of courage and a bracing of resolution before they parted. He was like the veteran soldier saying to his younger comrades, "Quit you like men. Be strong;" or like Bunyan's Greatheart among the pilgrims, giving them living water

from the road-side, and sending them on their way singing. A minister of Christ who, in his student days, had laboured as a missionary in one of the darkest places in the Canongate, thus writes of the way in which Mr Darling had often shed sunshine upon his rugged path :—" To me, as to all the other missionaries of the Church, he was a personal friend and a wise counsellor. Had he done nothing more than brighten the world with his cheerful smile, he would not have laboured in vain. His habitual cheerfulness was to many an inspiration. I always think of him as one in whom the love of Christ not only burned but glowed, making the world glad with his presence. Only a comparatively few know the silent deeds he did toward the poor, especially the children of the poor. When I was in the Canongate, his name was a household word."

PAROCHIAL BOARD.

There remains to be noticed another sphere of usefulness in which Mr Darling did noble service in the last four years of his life. He was chosen by his fellow-citizens as a member of the Parochial Board of the City of Edinburgh, his practical benevolence, well known

by this time over the city, having, no doubt, commended him to their choice. It is a great public institution, embracing in its care the city poor, and including in its management indoor relief especially in the administration of the poorhouse at Craiglockhart, and outdoor supervision and relief to multitudes scattered over the parish and living beyond the boundaries of the hospital. He was no mere ornamental Director, known principally by having his name in the almanac, or noisy debater and stickler about trifles at board meetings. His conscience and his heart alike would not allow him to appear in either of these characters; but from the beginning his presence and beneficent influence were felt in every department of the institution.

There were two features which specially characterised and commended his personal administration. One of these was his *taking up cases of individuals* in which he had not only to deal with poverty, but with intemperance or some other form of vice which had in part produced the poverty, and perseveringly plying every practicable means to produce a reformation. Temperance pledge tickets were always borne about his person as surely as his purse, and wherever the offender yielded to his persuasion and took the

pledge, he hailed it as a hopeful step that might lead, by God's help, to a more thorough change. And he continued to hope, and advise, and even entreat the object of his anxiety, in cases where many would have given up the battle in despair. He was a strong believer in the ultimate triumph of goodness, and the instances in which he succeeded, after long waiting and working, were sufficient to justify his confidence. When he beheld signs of begun reformation, he was not slow out of his own resources to add to the help supplied by the City charity ; and when he became convinced that the good change had come to bear the marks of stability, he used almost incredible efforts to obtain employment for the object of his many cares and prayers.

A second marked feature in his dealings with the poor, was the *heart and sympathy* which, of set purpose, he always endeavoured to associate with the distribution of the statutory doles. Every one knows how apt relief is to be given in those great public institutions with a chill of indifference, and, as it were, with an iron hand. In James Darling's ministrations to the poor, kind words and looks were associated with the benefactions, and one of the bitterest ingredients was taken out of the cup of poverty when the man was treated, not as a pauper, but as a brother.

EDINBURGH INTERNATIONAL EXHIBITION,
1886.—TEMPERANCE CAFÉ.

Mr Darling was actively identified with the great Edinburgh International Exhibition of 1886. Many of our readers will remember the spacious pavilion on the grounds outside the vast building, which contained the Temperance Café, and which he had contracted to supply with good refreshments at a reasonable price. The spirit of the patriotic citizen, quite as much as the business spirit, had drawn him into this very responsible enterprise. But from the first to the closing day the Temperance Café was in favour with all. The cleanly and tasteful arrangements of the interior, with its multitude of ferns and flowers, its chaste and simple furnishings, its verandahs filled with small tables, and the adjoining space utilised to meet the requirements of the crowding visitors, not to speak of the beautiful electric lighting of the grounds, gave to the whole scene quite a Continental aspect. "I was very much struck," says one, "by the general goodhumour which prevailed, and the patience which characterised those who were waiting their turn to be served ; but I admired still more the excellent service and the ample provision which was made for

the demands of the customers. It was no easy matter to arrange, often on short notice, for three or four thousand dinners and teas, with the limited space which Mr Darling possessed, and yet it has been done, and that in a most satisfactory manner." Financially he was a gainer; the coffers which had so often been drained by his benevolence were anew filled by Providence, for "there is that giveth and yet increaseth." He had also the satisfaction of knowing that this experience had proved on a large scale that rational enjoyment is possible without the aid of stimulants.

CLOSING YEARS.

In the beginning of 1889 Mr Darling began to show unmistakable signs of failing health. He was easily fatigued, and less able for his wonted tale of service. The landmark and limit of threescore years and ten now stood within sight. The change became more perceptible in November, on the occasion of the death of his brother-in-law, Mr James Bunyan, a man of kindred spirit, who had long been his fellow-worker in all his labours of love. There was now a settled languor which it seemed impossible to throw off. Spring came, with its song-birds and early flowers, and benefit was sought in a change of air and

scene, first in Rothesay, in the month of March, where he underwent a course of baths, and then in a short visit to Aberdeen and Inverness, in the midst of relatives and friends ; and in the end of April he returned to Edinburgh, with strength increased and appetite improved, and the old looks beginning to return. But before mid-summer was far advanced, he again became conscious of decaying strength, his altered looks were ominous, and his family and friends became seriously alarmed. Hitherto the symptoms had only been those of gastric catarrh, but it began to be suspected that something much worse was seriously at work. A consultation of skilled physicians and surgeons was held, when it was feared that the malady was much more deeply seated, and was perhaps irradicable. A long-cherished intention to visit a beloved married daughter, Mrs Murray, and her family, at Queensland, was now finally abandoned. Still a faint hope of recovery continued to be cherished.

Accordingly, towards the end of June, accompanied by Mrs Darling, our patient travelled northward to Inverness, to be present at the marriage of Dr Darling, their only son. In the Highland capital he remained for four weeks, making pleasant excursions to Strathpeffer, Beaul, Glen Urquhart, Nairn, and other scenes

of beauty and health resorts. Probably there was no visit which he enjoyed more than one which he made to a large gathering of Band of Hope children at Culloden. Here, under the presidency of Duncan Forbes, Esq. of Culloden, he gave what proved to be his last public address. It was a fit manner of closing his public life. Friends who were present on the occasion, remarked that even his zeal in the cause of temperance was far exceeded by the earnestness with which he expressed his desire that his young hearers would accept Christ as their Saviour, and their Guide and Guardian through the perils of life. Almost all his illustrations were taken from his own experience, and, though very homely, they never "missed fire." Some of his sentences sounded as if they were prophetic of what was coming, and the shadow of death had already fallen upon his spirit.

The month of August was spent by him at Kirkcaldy with his eldest daughter, Mrs Deas, her husband, and family ; and the greater part of September at Aboyne, on Deeside, with his eldest and only surviving brother Thomas, who loved him as even few brothers love.

In the end of September he returned to Edinburgh, happy to rest once more in the old home, and to be soothed and ministered to by loving

hearts. Although so greatly emaciated as to be hardly recognisable, no one imagined that the end was so near. But the sound of his Master's footsteps was soon to be heard even at the door.

LAST DAYS.

On the morning of the Lord's Day, 12th October, when preparing to go to church, whose services he loved, Mr Darling was seized with a violent shivering, accompanied by much sickness and pain. On Monday and Tuesday successive shiverings followed, and with the highly feverish condition thus produced great weakness ensued. He knew that this was the beginning of the end. On the afternoon of Wednesday, gathering together all his remaining strength, like Jacob of old, in a remarkable prayer, in which his spirit seemed to rise above itself, he commended the members of his family who were present, and also the absent ones with their children who were far away, to the keeping of their covenant - God. On the same day he was comforted by the visits of both his ministers. During those earlier days of the week he was wonderfully patient and uncomplaining under his sufferings, which were sometimes very great, in the midst of them all delighting in suggestions from those around

him which bore his thoughts Christward and heavenward. When he was no longer able to converse, one could read in his very looks the words of the hymn,—

“ How sweet the name of Jesus sounds
In a believer’s ear ;
It soothes his sorrows, heals his wounds,
And drives away his fear.”

During the whole of Thursday he was not fully conscious, in consequence of the administration of opiates, which needed to be resorted to in order to deaden the intense pain. On Friday evening, when the call of his Master was very near, his family sang at his bedside some of those favourite hymns which had often been to him as cold water to a thirsty soul, such as “ There is a Happy Land,” “ There are Angels hovering round,” “ How sweet the name of Jesus sounds ;” and it was evident, from the beaming smile upon his countenance, and the keeping time with his head to the music, that when his lips were silent his heart was singing with them. Scarcely was the singing ended when the summons came to go up to the higher worship of heaven, and at 8.15 P.M. he passed away, with a look of solemn gladness, as if breathing those words of Jesus which had immediately before been quoted in his hear-

ing, "Father, into Thy hands I commend my spirit."

Mr Darling died on the evening of Friday, 17th October 1890.

FUNERAL.

The interment of his mortal remains took place on Monday, 20th October; and on the forenoon of the following Sabbath, a Memorial Sermon was preached by the Rev. John Smith, worthy alike of the preacher and of his subject. We quote the account of the funeral service, procession, and burial, from the pen of an appreciating and loving eye - witness and friend :—

"The funeral of Mr Darling took place on the afternoon of Monday last, when his remains were followed to the Echo Bank Cemetery by an exceptionally large procession, comprising a large number of distinguished citizens of Edinburgh, and of public men from several parts of the United Kingdom. A service was conducted in the large dining-room of the Regent Hotel by the Rev. Dr Andrew Thomson, which was attended by many of the leading citizens and personal friends of the deceased. A similar service was conducted in the Waverley Hall,

kindly placed at the service of the family by Bailie Cranston, which was crowded by a deeply interested and sympathetic audience. The service there was conducted by the Rev. Dr Mair, Rev. George Wilson, and Rev. J. G. Cunningham. Large numbers of persons lined the streets towards the North Bridge, and among those were to be noticed many of the poorer classes, numbers of whom were to be seen giving unmistakable evidence of their having lost a kind benefactor. The hearse was preceded by a large band of the Carrubber's Close workers, male and female; and there followed it—1st, personal relatives; 2nd, the kirk-session of Broughton Place Church; then the leading representatives of the temperance and evangelical organisations in the city, ministers of all denominations, several prominent members of the medical profession, and a large concourse of the general public.

“On reaching the cemetery the Carrubber's Close Mission workers filed to each side, while the honoured and beloved dead was borne along between the ranks by companions in the fight, accompanied by songs of exultant triumph over death and the grave.

“A service was then conducted at the grave by the Rev. John Smith, of Broughton Place Church. Before leaving the cemetery, another

hymn was sung, joined in by the company of mourners, who by their presence had paid a marked tribute to one of the most useful of public citizens."

Our readers will welcome a reminiscence from Principal Cairns, which grandly closes and interprets the picture at the interment :—

"I had hurried back from a heavy day's work in Aberdeen, not in time for any other service, but only at the grave. It was a dreary, chilly day, and as the great mourning crowd wound round to the centre of interest and joined themselves to the multitude that already filled the place, the leaden gloom had turned into steady and driving rain. The hymn of the Carrubber's Close choir before, and the hymn after, and the prayer of Mr Smith between, looked like a battle with the elements, which must be lost. Yet such was the bursting joy and thankfulness in the memory of that noble Christian life, monuments of which were all around in those who had been rescued and helped, both old and young, that rarely has such a vision of 'the land that is fairer than day' gladdened any company, and the parting was to many like an opening heaven rather than a sad or long farewell."

As we leave behind us in the grave the dust of this servant of God, there to rest in hope until the resurrection dawn, and as we follow in thought his ransomed spirit up to the blessed world, there rise up before our mind such divine words as these: "They that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament, and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars for ever and ever;" and that saying also of our Divine Master Himself, that those of whom we have been the benefactors on earth, and who have gone up before us to glory, shall receive and welcome us, when we die, "into everlasting habitations." There is surely no presumption or rashness in associating such promises as these with the heavenly position of one who, like the subject of our narrative, for more than fifty years, abounded in the work of the Lord. Oh, what wondrous, exuberantly gracious promises, overflowing with love like the laden honeycomb with sweetness! The happiness of those whom we had been the willing instruments of guiding into the way of life, will be an immeasurable enhancement of our own. Their heaven will be to us like a second heaven. There is no official monopoly of such rewards. The humblest Christian with such a history behind him, will have divine warrant to say, amid the mutual

recognitions of the glorious world, to those whom, by the help of the Spirit, he had "converted from the error of their way," and won back to Christ, "What is our hope, or joy, or crown? Are not even ye in the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ at His coming?" Here is the divine conception of the highest form of human greatness. The man who denies and forgets himself for the benefit of others, and every day walks in the blessed footprints of Him who "went about doing good," is, like John the Baptist, "great in the sight of the Lord." "Whosoever will be great among you, let him be your minister. And whosoever will be chief among you, let him be your servant." Who shall be content to wear a starless crown? It is an ambition worthy of an archangel to have been a soul-winner for Christ.

"Be good, my friend, and let who will be clever.
Do noble things, not dream them all day long;
And thus make life, death, and that vast forever,
One grand sweet song."

SERMON

Preached in Broughton Place Church,

ON THE

Forenoon of Sabbath, 26th October 1890,

BY THE

REV. JOHN SMITH, M.A.

S E R M O N.

"Precious in the sight of the LORD is the death of His saints.

—PSALM cxvi. 15.

THESE are the words of a man who has been delivered from death. All through the psalm there are many incidental indications of his grievous affliction. "I was brought low," he cries. Again, in vivid remembrance of particular experiences, he exclaims, "The sorrows of death compassed me, the pains of Hades gat hold on me." Yea, added to his physical distress, there seems to have been some soul-grief from his enemies. "I have said to myself in my despair, all men are a lie." It would seem for a moment as if he had lost all faith, plunged in such agony and gloom. But, like a strong swimmer, he emerges from the overwhelming flood. "I believe," he cried, shaking from him the phantoms of his despair,— "I believe, for I must speak." And what has he to say? What thousands of sufferers have had to say,—that when all human help failed, God drew

near. "I was brought low, and He helped me." The psalm is one joyous ascription of praise to his deliverer God.

With all this, however, we do not, at least this morning, take to do, but only with one fresh thought which the Psalmist has brought back from the gates of the grave. In the school of sorrow he had learned a lesson which he never knew before. Formerly he had thought of death in the way most men think of it, as an enemy always prowling around, as a dark possibility which might any moment be realised, as a casualty or accident with which we must ever be ready to reckon, and in itself as pure loss, the annihilation of all in which we delight. His soul-perturbation in presence of death shows what it meant to him.

As never before, he has been impressed with God's particular personal love to him, one of his servants. The note of passionate attachment struck in the first line runs right through. Then his unlooked for escape has let him see that all events are within the control of God. He helped me. The whole world of iron circumstance, as some think it, is just a theatre for God to display the freeness of His grace, the splendour of His righteousness. But if that be true, then something else follows. There can be no such thing

as accident. A divine purpose reigns through all. If he was sent back from the gates of death, it must be because there were work and discipline for him in time. He had work to do, vows to fulfil here in the presence of his people. The death of God's people was not something which they stumbled on by accident. It was the consummation of time's discipline, the divine crown put upon their career. Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of His saints. In the sight of men, the precious thing about a life is its achievement, the power we come to exert, the work we accomplish. But God sees deeper. Our success or failure, the bruit of our fame, the magnitude of our work, belong to the order of things which pass away. Below the surface, the eye of God is piercing to the kind of personality which is forming in the discipline of time. And His supreme interest in you and me, if I may speak thus of a Divine Being, gathers round the hour of death. His interests are concentrated on that moment. Here His personal joy, His personal reward, is found for all His unwearied care through the past. For here in death, a redeemed personality emerges from the limitations and dark possibilities of time, into new eternal conditions of perfect safety, perfect life, perfect peace. Here afresh is seen the triumph of His grace, the

consummation of His purpose, the justification in perfected character of His redemptive work.

Let us meditate a little this morning on these thoughts. And to begin,—

I. *A saint's death is precious to God as a moral spectacle.* Now, is not that strange, that death the curse should become death the crown,—that what in its first infliction was the stroke of God's anger, should be precious in His sight? You remember when the children of Israel had but shortly set out from Egypt, they came upon Marah, a very bitter pool. But the Lord showed Moses a tree which made what was bitter sweet. It is by a tree which the Lord has showed us, that the complexion of death has for us been entirely changed. The death of Christ, which took off the curse of death from us, was in its intrinsic character the crown of His life's obedience. He was obedient unto—up to death. And so death is, for us, the crown of a life's obedience. The believer struggles through agony after agony of surrender, on to the goal so beautifully described by Paul, the being made conformable to His death. The blessed God who gave us being, who called us with a holy calling, who has been guiding us along every step of our pilgrimage, as He brings us near to the gates of the grave, knows that the grand crisis of faith's history is at hand. We

have been trusting Him, trusting Him more and more as we drank more deeply of His love, trusting to Him our soul's every interest, our every earthly concern. But faith's crowning act still remains. And the soul is travelling on to that through the valley of ever-thickening shadow that preludes death. There faith must meet the shadow feared of man. There he must bid good night to every dearest friend, to this world, his familiar home, to the light of heaven. There he must endure the fierce shakings of his earthly tabernacle, the sealing of his senses, the wrench which separates him from his last hold on time, the plunge of his naked spirit into the unknown. And faith must triumph there. Rising absolutely above circumstance, above pain and fear, yielding itself entirely into the hand of God, the spirit must be strong to pass out of the seen into the unseen—to trust all ere it know all. That is death to the saint, and that is life's triumph in the eye of God.

And so as life nears its end, it grows in moral interest. God bends over the wasting frame as friends do here. But He eyes the spirit, while the body's wants engross them. He sees the patience with which the sufferer bears his trouble. He notes how every circumstance is turned into a reason for joy. When human ears are sealed in

sleep, He hears the mutterings of praise, the whispered appeals for grace. Looking within the soul, He sees fear subdued by the boldness of love, and temptation repelled by the shield of faith. Ay—and what even human eyes can see—He beholds the whole man transfigured by an indwelling Christ, reflecting no more the coarseness and caprice of time, but the gentleness and purity of heaven. Oh! that is beautiful in God's sight. What are all the precious things of earth to this spiritual beauty, perfected through suffering, coming refined and glistening from the fire of death!

And who is this so rapidly attaining, about, so soon as death sets his seal, to be made complete? Once he was a child of wrath, even as others. Long did he grieve God. At times it appeared as if, in the great struggle of moral decision, the world or the flesh might lead him astray. With loving kindness, however, God drew him, till at last he submitted to His will. Still, however, how self-willed, or ambitious, or dilatory, he often was! What stumblings and falls marked his opening career! But God does not break the bruised reed. He fans into flame the smouldering fire. Slowly through years, despite relapses and lulls, he brings the Christ-life within, out into assured triumph. He is now ready to be

offered up. He has fought the good fight, finished the course, kept the faith. Yes, another step toward the great consummation. Another victory of right over wrong, of Christ over Satan. Another come out of great tribulation, having washed his robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. Most precious is such an event. It is a minute in the hour of this dispensation. These individual triumphs are the time-beats by which God reckons the advancing triumph of His kingdom.

II. *But the death of the saint is precious to God, because it emancipates a soul from the trammels of the flesh.* We that are in this tabernacle do groan, being burdened. The discipline of the flesh, if very necessary, is very painful. True, in earlier life this is not so much felt. Indeed, through the avenues of the senses and the bodily appetites the dormant mind of the babe is first stirred into active existence. And through our earlier years, our abounding physical energy reacts on the more sluggish currents of the mind. But when our mental powers reach their full maturity, the body soon comes to be felt as a clog. Mere physical necessity absorbs so much time and thought, that the interests of the soul can only secure fragments of attention and opportunity. The unsubdued flesh, attack-

ing or weighting us, consumes in mere friction great part of our spiritual power. And then there are special trials, individual weaknesses, constitutional frailties, inherited disease (mental and physical), hampering us at every turn, so that, strive as we may, we can produce but little, and are constrained to cry, "Few and evil have the days of my pilgrimage been."

And now by disease the voice is brought to a husky whisper, and the body is chained to a sick-bed, and all power of work is taken away. And while the moral submission of the soul amid that weakness is precious to God, while the weakness itself as affording occasion for such an outburst of trust has a certain preciousness in His view, still it is intolerable that a soul so developed into the likeness of Christ should remain ingulfed in the grave of the body. In the fulness of its spiritual manhood it has become fit for the liberty of heaven. He has grown his spirit-wings, and is ready to join the winged hosts above. He has tuned his voice, and is prepared for the immortal choirs. Do you not see then what in death is precious to God? Amid the tumultuous tossings of disease, a soul, perfected in the discipline of time, is preparing to launch out into the liberty of heaven. Those pangs are the creakings of the giving clay. The

hammer-strokes of trouble are driving from under the man the props of the flesh. A moment, and the spirit will have sailed into his native element and found its eternal home.

It is precious. None rejoices in such emancipation more than our Father. In all His child's affliction He has been afflicted. He has entered into every sorrow, felt every fear, understood every shrinking, realised, changeless though He be, every change. And He has permitted it all to happen. But only because He has had this emancipation in view. And now the training time is past, the discipline is undergone. Never in the course of eternity will it have to be endured again. The winter is past, the rain is over and gone, the summer of the soul has come.

See the Father welcome His child. All the unbounded compassion for the prodigal is there, but all sorrow for the prodigal's sin is taken away. Instead, there is complacency ineffable, because of the beauty of the perfectly redeemed child. Well done, good and faithful servant! that is his welcome. Well done, servant; come from faithful toil in the outfield of time, rest thee now upon My throne! Well done, soldier of the cross, put sword and spear by, and take these white garments of holy peace! Well done, sufferer, thou shalt be a singer, now that night is

past and the morning of thy joy is come!
Well done!

And now, how shall we fashion to ourselves the fellowship between the emancipated and their Lord? Once a painter showed me two or three colours on his palette, and said, mournfully, I have only these with which to paint sunshine. And we have only the lustreless relations of earth with which to show forth the love-life of heaven. The joy of a father in seeing his son, once a babe, administering with him their business or estate, must in unspeakably higher fashion be God's, who beholds His once weak and sinful child equal to heavenly service without a fault before His throne. The joy of the king in seeing gathered round his person a noble band of warriors, disciplined for war through years of stern yet lavish training, mantles in God's heart as they that have gotten the victory gather round Christ, His body, the perfect agents of His infinite will. The joy of the teacher in being able, after years of painstaking instruction, to hold full intellectual fellowship with the young minds he has trained, is a faint reflection of the Father's joy as He welcomes His redeemed ones into a closeness of fellowship in which they shall know as they are known. He joys over them with joy; He rests in His love; He joys over

them with singing. Brave death! thou hast done thy work well. In thy furnace thou hast burnt off every spot and stain. They are to the praise of the glory of God's grace.

III. *The death of a saint is precious in God's sight, because it liberates his life as an influence.* This is a thought really lying imbedded in the text, although it may not immediately appear. It is Jehovah who regards His saints' death as precious,—the covenant-God who is at this moment in the travail of a great plan. The battle between good and evil was raging in the Psalmist's day. As fiercely and still more widely it rages now. And God is profoundly interested in this conflict. He has committed His cause into the hands of men. His glory is bound up with the triumph of the right. Now, from this point of view, it is difficult to look at the death of the saintly or the self-sacrificing as other than a loss. One finds difficulty in realising how God could regard it in any other light. With this thought in their minds, the Psalmists cried for life—shall the dead praise Thee? And when God's hand has been laid on faithful or conspicuous workers, have we not been filled with a painful and baffled sense of loss? To put it frankly, has it not appeared to our impatient minds as if God were impoverishing His own followers, weakening His own cause?

Now I am not here to affirm that the removal of notable workers does not inflict grievous loss. Why, looking back over the course of the kingdom of God, one sees, after great spring-tides of moral influence in a Luther, a Knox, a Wesley, ebbs that have lasted through centuries. Without waiting at all to inquire what limitations should be placed to this thought, let me say that there is another aspect to this subject. Death does not annihilate a saint's influence. Very often it liberates and vastly increases it. While he was on earth, what was deepest in him was often cloaked and obscured by the trivial circumstances of the hour. Men judged him by the accidents of life, far more than by its essence. Slight deficiencies, or even awkwardnesses, blinded men to remarkable excellences. And all the clash and confusion of diverse parties, of contending interests, of class prejudice, further dulled and diverted their thought. But when death comes, the boisterous voices of the hour are hushed. The surface accidents of life drop off. The essential elements in the character rise into distinctness and orb into a living whole. And so, where the holiness and the self-devotion are remarkable, the man becomes liberated as an elevating moral presence and a powerful moral influence, by that death which removes himself from the world.

This fact is recognised even beyond the Christian pale. Those persons who reject to their own discomfort the doctrine of personal immortality, extol this subjective immortality of influence. They find a cold comfort in thinking, that after they have rotted away body and soul, like a marsh-light above their grave, virtue from them will flicker for a little while. What however can after all give but little comfort to them, is a very well of strength to us. We do not believe in a pitiable succession of mere mortal generations, which must yet come to utter nothing, as this played-out planet rushes into the sun. We believe in God. We believe in the kingdom of God. We believe in the eternal consummation of that kingdom. And our faith is, that when we are—not annihilated—but taken home as we have just seen, into an eternity of fellowship with God, our influence here—that is, if we have been thoroughly consecrated men and women—lives on. Looking around us, we see individual workers, as they die and pass away, leaving the impress of their individuality on their time. Their lives crowned in death become a spiritual oxygen, permeating the very air. All men breathe it, the world is bettered by it, a new standard of obligation is created, a higher conception of sacrifice possesses the Christian

imagination. The Church grows up into the image of its holy dead. Thus do we progress. Character tested by suffering, crowned by the surrender of death, is our great teacher. For the Church's progress is primarily a will-progress—life-assimilation to the will of God.

What a stimulus the very thought should be to those still fighting and struggling on. Let us live lives that shall outlive death, and survive in an enlarged influence when we have gone. But, to hasten to an end, do we not see from another point of view the truth of our text? If death, setting its seal to a good man's life, liberates that life as an influence in the world, is it not a precious thing? If when a character has reached a certain height death stamps it complete, so that as a well-defined force it acts on society, is not death in the hand of God a valuable agent in the service of truth? Who heard the name of Frederic Robertson till death, crowning with completeness that pure and lofty character, gave circulation wide as the world to his literary remains? See death as it fixes the enraptured gaze of Livingstone, and liberates his spirit from its worn-out tabernacle, liberating and breathing over the earth the aroma of his consecration, the inspiration of his life. Such facts are repeated myriads of times in every generation of the Church. The hearts of

us all are graves of holy memories, and we are what we are to no small extent because some who have gone before were what they were.

Yes, precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of His saints. Every holy life completed in death is an active force, in some hearts, on the side of right. Satan is the weaker for it, Christ the stronger. A greatly exalted life is like a mighty lever lifting nations through centuries :—

“The saints who seem to die in earth’s rude strife
Only win double life.
They have but left our weary ways,
To live in memory here,
In heaven by love and praise.”

IV. One last thought. *Surely this whole theme gives a very affecting view of God’s warm, close, personal interest in us.* Granting we are His saints, devoted to Him, and that the life of God is begun in us, every stage of that life is of interest to Him, and most of all the crowning stage of death. Should we not then live in His light, should we not give the planning of our lives into His hand? The only one who need fear death is the man at cross purposes with God, who has interests apart from God, ends contrary to the will of God, or not clearly in line with His will. For him there will be humblings, breakings in the place of dragons, it may be uncertainty and

fear. But to the child of God resting in, following after the divine command, death has lost every atom of dread. It is the goal of our pilgrimage, the moral mark to which we run, the supreme test of time. The very view of death which divests it of dread, invests it with awe. Though in a land of peace thou art secure, how wilt thou do in the swellings of Jordan? You are saving earthly wealth for a time, when from old age you can no longer provide for your wants. What provision are you making for the spiritual emergencies of the future? Would it not be dreadful to founder just outside the harbour gate? Is faith with you not a mere hearsay, but an independent spirit-born conviction anchored in the promise of God? Has it been growing or dwindling, blossoming like Aaron's rod into the glory of a new life, or withering up to a mere memory? Is it supported in your life by fresh experience, in your will by a sanctified character, in your intellect by wide views of revelation, in your imagination by prophetic realisations of coming good? Are you in your whole being committed to faith, so that you can say, "Therefore will I not fear though the earth be removed, and the mountains be cast into the depths of the sea"? Or have you on board your soul an undisciplined crew of unsubdued

propensities and desires,—love of pleasure, love of position, love of praise, and such like? How do you know, then, but when the winds rise and the waves beat in upon your soul, and troubles like spume and mist of the sea cut you off from your fellows, and away on the farther shore you can hear the breaking of the waves,—how do you know but that the faith which governs you so little, may turn out to be a fiction powerless to control or guide? how do you know but this undisciplined crew, mutinying in the hour of danger, may cast faith into chains, and lead you away into darkness? How many suffer shipwreck ere they reach the shore, and are glad to make the haven on a broken spar! Be not deceived, God is not mocked. He hates sin as much as before Christ died. Yea, He hates it more, if that were possible, since what it was in sin to do, by Christ's ignominious death has been revealed. But most of all He hates its presence in one who has been forgiven through Christ's sacrifice, and renewed through Christ's spirit, and who through wantonness stumbles back from liberty to bondage. With that God will hold no compromise; either He will consume the sin out of the man, or consume the man in his sin.

That is the reason of the shadowed deathbeds of some Christian men. True, even to those who

keep close to Christ, death does not lack an element of awe. It is no light or easy matter to venture forward into the unseen. He has but a poor idea of the holiness of God, and of his own imperfection, who is not cast into utter self-abasement in the divine presence. But let us abide in Christ, and as the pillars of our being shake, through its rending walls, the glory of Christ's indwelling will more and still more brightly break. And as God sees in us the forming image of His son, He will be drawn out toward us with an ever-growing intensity of affection. Our path, however shadowed with physical pain, shall be brightened with an ever-augmenting sense of His presence and favour. Ere we know, we shall have won our release, to learn through eternity how precious we are to God, from the measureless gifts of His love.

And now it is my privilege, according to the custom which has obtained in this church, to say some few words regarding a highly esteemed member of session, whom God has taken to himself. Regarding the late Mr James Darling, it is easy to entertain the view of death contained in our text. As in one of the darkest days of this season, and amid the falling rain, the great company of mourners passed on through the

streets, and especially as they lifted their voices in song around the grave, there seemed to be less of grief than of a subdued and sacred joy. Save for the friends left behind, save for the causes lacking his assistance, there was nothing to regret. A good man had finished his course, a faithful worker had found rest and reward; a servant who had much of His Master's lowly, loving, self-denying spirit, had risen into his Master's presence.

Following what, I believe, would have been our departed friend's wish, I shall not enter into details regarding his life. Rather would I impress the lessons of his life on those who remain. In my view there is great inspiration for us all in this finished career. Some men stand so separate from their fellows because of conspicuous gifts that they cannot be imitated. But Mr Darling lives in our hearts, less because of any remarkable and outstanding service, though he was a man of exceptional energy, than because of the beauty of a life wholly consecrated to the service of the Master. His religion shone out in everything.

Not without struggle and difficulty in his earlier career, Mr Darling resolved to honour God in his daily calling. And God blessed him even in respect of worldly prosperity,

enabling him in his very business to throw a Christian atmosphere round innumerable lives, and cheer and refresh many weary hearts. Diligent in business however though he was, he was not absorbed in it. All through life he displayed a beautiful compassion with suffering and distress. His feet were shod with the readiness of the gospel of peace. In work among the young he took singular delight. The joy that beamed in his countenance as he moved among them, showed the spirit that burned within. Then, how indefatigable he was in the support of the great temperance cause,—and indeed of every movement which recognised the Gospel as its main weapon, and aimed at the renewal and elevation of men. He left to others the chief places, content to be a worker in the ranks. There was nothing too lowly, no service too unwelcome, for him to undertake. To the foulest den, to the prison cell, he followed those who had been brought under his eye. With his own hands he washed, and fed, and clad outcast children, whom he would bring to Jesus. Nothing seemed to daunt him in his Master's work. The energy, the holy persistency, the unfailing cheerfulness, with which he met difficulty conquered it. Young workers felt an inspiration in his life, and gathered round him. And so this humble

man—for humble he was to the last—became a great individual force in this city. When he died men woke up to realise what he had been. From all churches and all classes in this community, from every corner of this land and from other lands, came tributes to his worth. He was followed to his grave by such a crowd as ordinarily gathers only round the remains of our most notable men. And now he has fought a good fight; from the fetters of the flesh he is freed;—and his meek and saintly memory, liberated by death, will live as an influence in many hearts for many days. “Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of His saints.”

APPENDIX.

APPENDIX.

MINUTES AND LETTERS OF SYMPATHY.

BROUGHTON PLACE UNITED PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH,
EDINBURGH.

CHURCH OFFICES, 20th October 1890.

The Monthly Meeting of Session was held this evening at 7.30, and was constituted by the Rev. John Smith, Moderator.

Inter alia,—The Session having received intimation of the death of Mr James Darling, agreed to place on record their deep sense of the great loss sustained by them, in the removal from their midst of one so energetic in labour for the Master, and so generally beloved. They fondly recall the many Christian graces which adorned the character of their departed brother; his warm and self-sacrificing philanthropic spirit; his joy in service, especially among the poor, the afflicted, and the young; his strong sympathy with social reform; his eager usefulness in evangelistic work; his readiness to undertake the most unwelcome tasks for the good of the Church and the glory of Christ; and the brotherliness of disposition which endeared him to all who were associated with him in the oversight of the congregation. They deeply sympathise with the bereaved widow and family, and pray that they may receive the abundant consolation of Divine grace.

The Clerk was instructed to send excerpt of this minute to Mrs Darling and family, with the kind regards and sympathy of the Session.

Extracted from Minutes of Session of Broughton Place Church.

ALEX. WHITE, *Session Clerk.*

BROUGHTON PLACE BAND OF HOPE.

MEETING OF COMMITTEE,
19th November 1890.

Excerpt.

The Committee of the Band of Hope record with deep regret the loss sustained through the death of Mr James Darling, on 17th October.

Mr Darling was one of the founders of the Band of Hope in Broughton Place, and it was meet that when it was formed he should be elected one of its Vice-Presidents. In its progress he took the warmest interest, and its success was no doubt helped considerably by his hearty co-operation and support. The increasing number of members from session to session seemed to cheer his heart ; and when it was found desirable to form a Senior Section, he rejoiced in this new departure. His readiness to help in every way available was most marked, and the recollection of his kindly smile and cheery word will long be cherished by young and old alike.

The Committee recall with satisfaction the many meetings in which he took part, but more especially the happy occasion, two years ago, on which, with many friends, they celebrated together his Jubilee as a total

abstainer. In the removal of Mr Darling, they feel that they have lost a friend indeed ; and his example, as an earnest and devoted worker in the total abstinence cause, they trust will prove a stimulus and encouragement to them.

They unite in expressing their deep sympathy with the family, who have thus been bereaved,—and their prayer is, that the God whom he delighted to serve may comfort and sustain them.

CARRUBBER'S CLOSE MISSION.

EDINBURGH, *October 1890.*

Extract from Minutes.

By the departure from among us of Mr James Darling, one of our Directors, a loss has fallen upon the Mission, and upon the city, of no ordinary kind.

He was a man who was so singularly transparent and unassuming, that he could without difficulty be "known and read of all men." His faith was of that simple character which ensures admission to the kingdom ; while the lowly service which he was ever ready to render to the least of Christ's brethren, was of that kind which paves the way to true greatness in that kingdom. His well-known figure will be greatly missed in evangelistic and other meetings, where he seemed to charge himself with getting every one comfortably seated, while he himself was content to stand or sit down in some obscure corner.

Now he has received the call from the Master to "Come up higher."

He manifested the most disinterested concern in helping

forward many enterprises with which he might be supposed to have nothing to do, thereby exemplifying the manner in which might be fulfilled the Apostle's exhortation, "Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others." He made himself the friend of all, and the servant of all. The practice which he regularly observed of conducting family worship in his Hotel drawing-room, and the manner in which that service was performed by him, has made the visit to his house a memorable one to many. One who had passed a night in the Hotel, alluding to this practice, aptly remarked that Mr Darling truly "made room for Christ in the inn." The Hotel was a kind of Christian club, to which eminent Christian workers from all parts of our own and other lands found their way. There many a "plan of campaign" against the drink curse, and other forces of evil in the city, were devised. He engaged the interest, the pecuniary support, and the active co-operation of his visitors in aid of this Mission, the Drill Hall Free Breakfast, and other religious agencies. The blessing to this community which accompanied the addresses of those speakers who lodged in his Hotel, and whom he introduced to various meetings in the city, cannot possibly be estimated.

Servant of God, well done !
Rest from thy loved employ ;
The battle fought, the victory won,
Enter thy Master's joy.

The following Resolution was unanimously passed at the Gospel-Temperance Demonstration held in Carrubber's Close Mission, on Saturday, 18th October 1890, and at which there was an attendance of about fifteen hundred:—

“This Gospel - Temperance gathering, representing friends of the Gospel and of Gospel-temperance, belonging to all evangelical denominations in the city of Edinburgh, learns with deep regret of the death of Mr James Darling, and desires to convey to Mrs Darling and family the sincere expression of their sympathy with them in their severe loss.

“This meeting recalls the great services Mr Darling rendered to the cause of Christ and to the Temperance Reformation, and further remembers the hearty and disinterested work he has long accomplished in connection with the Carrubber's Close Mission. Mr Darling's death is a severe loss to our Mission, and will make a great blank in Christian circles in Edinburgh, where he was universally respected and loved.

“It is a sad thought that never more on this side of Time will his happy smile and devoted life be brought into personal contact with the victims of our downgrade, who were his special care ; but the very recollection of what he was, will inspire fresh hope and zeal in the hearts of his fellow-labourers who remain, and who will feel his removal laying a special obligation upon them to devote themselves more and more to the work he had so much at heart.”

Signed in name of meeting,

T. R. MARSHALL, *President.*

G. A. BARCLAY, *Vice-President.*

EDINBURGH BAND OF HOPE UNION.

5 ST ANDREW SQUARE,
EDINBURGH, 22nd October 1890.

*Excerpt from the Minutes of Meeting of Directors of
the Edinburgh Band of Hope Union, held here on
Tuesday, 21st October 1890.*

On this the first meeting of the Edinburgh Band of Hope Union Directorate after the death of Mr James Darling, one of their number, the Directors desire to place on record the high esteem which they entertained for him, the sorrow with which they have heard of his death, and the sympathy which they feel for his bereaved family.

Quiet, humble, and unostentatious, but earnest and laborious, Mr Darling early threw himself into the Band of Hope movement, bore it up in prayer, supported it by contributions, and helped to carry it on by his personal exertions.

Never can his brother-workers forget him ; lovingly will they cherish the memory of his unwearied co-operation ; and long will they miss his kindly help, his wise advice, and his godly influence.

W. G. BRUCE, *Secy.*

EDINBURGH PAROCHIAL BOARD.

Excerpt Minute of Monthly Meeting of the Parochial Board of Edinburgh, held within the Board Room, 2 Forrest Road, on Monday, the 20th October 1890.

William Officer, Esq., S.S.C., in the chair.

Inter alia,—The Chairman stated that it was with deep regret he had to announce the death of one of their number, Mr James Darling, who had been connected with them for the past four years, during which time they had ample opportunity of observing the earnest manner in which he advocated the interests of the poor. He therefore moved that the Board record their appreciation of Mr Darling's services to the parish, their deep sense of the loss which they have sustained by his decease, and their sympathy with his bereaved widow and family,—which was agreed to, and the Inspector was instructed to send an excerpt of this Minute to Mrs Darling.—A true excerpt.

G. GREIG, *Insp.*

EDINBURGH TOTAL ABSTINENCE SOCIETY.

COMMITTEE ROOMS, 52 NICOLSON STREET
EDINBURGH, 21st October 1890.

DEAR SIR,

May I be allowed, in the name of our Committee, to convey to yourself and the members of the late Mr Darling's family, their deep sympathy with you in your bereavement. Mr Darling for many years was a

leal supporter of temperance work and our Society, and as such his way-going has left another blank to fill up with kindred devoted life. The past few weeks have been a harvesting time of the old and tried heroes of the temperance movement, and it is a blessed comfort to know that beyond the silent valley, and up the sunny slopes of the mountain of the Lord, there can follow the love of those who have been blessed by his example and strengthened by his kindly aid. Accept our deepest sympathy and regard.

I remain,

Your faithful Servant,

WILLIAM TODD, *Secy.*

Dr DARLING.

Besides the above Minutes from Public Bodies, Mrs Darling and Family have received nearly five hundred letters of sympathy from friends in this and other countries, which they wish gratefully to acknowledge. Only one of these can be given here, along with a tribute of regard from the Servants at the Regent Hotel.

SCOTTISH TEMPERANCE LEAGUE.

108 HOPE STREET,
GLASGOW, 31st October 1890.

DEAR MRS DARLING,

It was with very deep regret that I received intimation of the death of your dear husband and my dear friend of thirty-four years' standing, and I was very sorry that I could not be present at his funeral. I had a very warm regard for Mr Darling. I first visited Dalkeith on the 4th of September 1856—thirty-four years ago. I stayed in your hotel, and I shall never forget the great kindness that I received from yourself and him on that occasion. On the following day he spent some hours in introducing me to all the members of the League in the town. During the time that you were at St Andrews I stayed several times in your hotel. I have often stayed with you since you came to Edinburgh, and the kindness which I received from you at the first has not only been sustained, but has abounded more and more. Mr Darling was one of the best and most lovable of men. I look back with a melancholy satisfaction upon the hours spent in his company, and esteem it a great privilege to have enjoyed his friendship. I thank God for all that he was as the head of his family, as the head of his hotel, as a friend, as a temperance reformer, as a philanthropist, as a Christian, as an office-bearer in the Christian Church, and as a Christian worker.

He will be greatly missed in all these circles ; I shall miss him much ; but he will be missed most of all at his own fireside by you and your dear family, by whom he was best known and most deeply loved. You have the

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great consolation that the parting is not final, but only for a little. He has only gone home by an earlier train, and in due time we shall follow and meet him again to part no more.

Dear Mrs Darling, I hope that you and your dear family will all be comforted and sustained under your great bereavement by the hopes and consolations of the glorious Gospel. I hope yourself and family are all keeping well.

With deepest sympathy and warm regards,

I am,

Dear Mrs DARLING,

Yours faithfully,

WM. JOHNSTON, *Secy.*

FROM THE HOTEL SERVANTS.

REGENT HOTEL, *11th April 1891.*

DEAR MRS DARLING,

Hearing that a memoir of your late esteemed husband is about to be published, we, as representatives of your servants, take this opportunity of paying our humble but sincere tribute to his memory. We, more than most, have cause to lament his death, for he was a master such as we are not likely to find again. He made the welfare and happiness of his servants his especial care, and though master he was ever ready to lend a helping hand. He was no task-master, but rather a kind and sympathetic friend, who stood to us in the relation of a parent rather than of a master. This was especially the

case when any of us were laid on beds of sickness. At such a time his kindness and care were very acceptable to those who were far removed from their own homes and parents.

When we gathered round the family altar all distinctions were for the time abolished, and we felt that we were worshipping God in deed and in truth. Many of us will never forget the many lessons learned, and the many happy and hallowed hours spent there. All the servants join us in expressing their sorrow at your great loss, and in hoping that God will comfort you and all your family.

Again we thank you all for all past kindnesses, which we have ever appreciated.

We remain, Madam,

Your obedient Servants,

JAMES WHITEHEAD.

JOHN MACGREGOR.

